

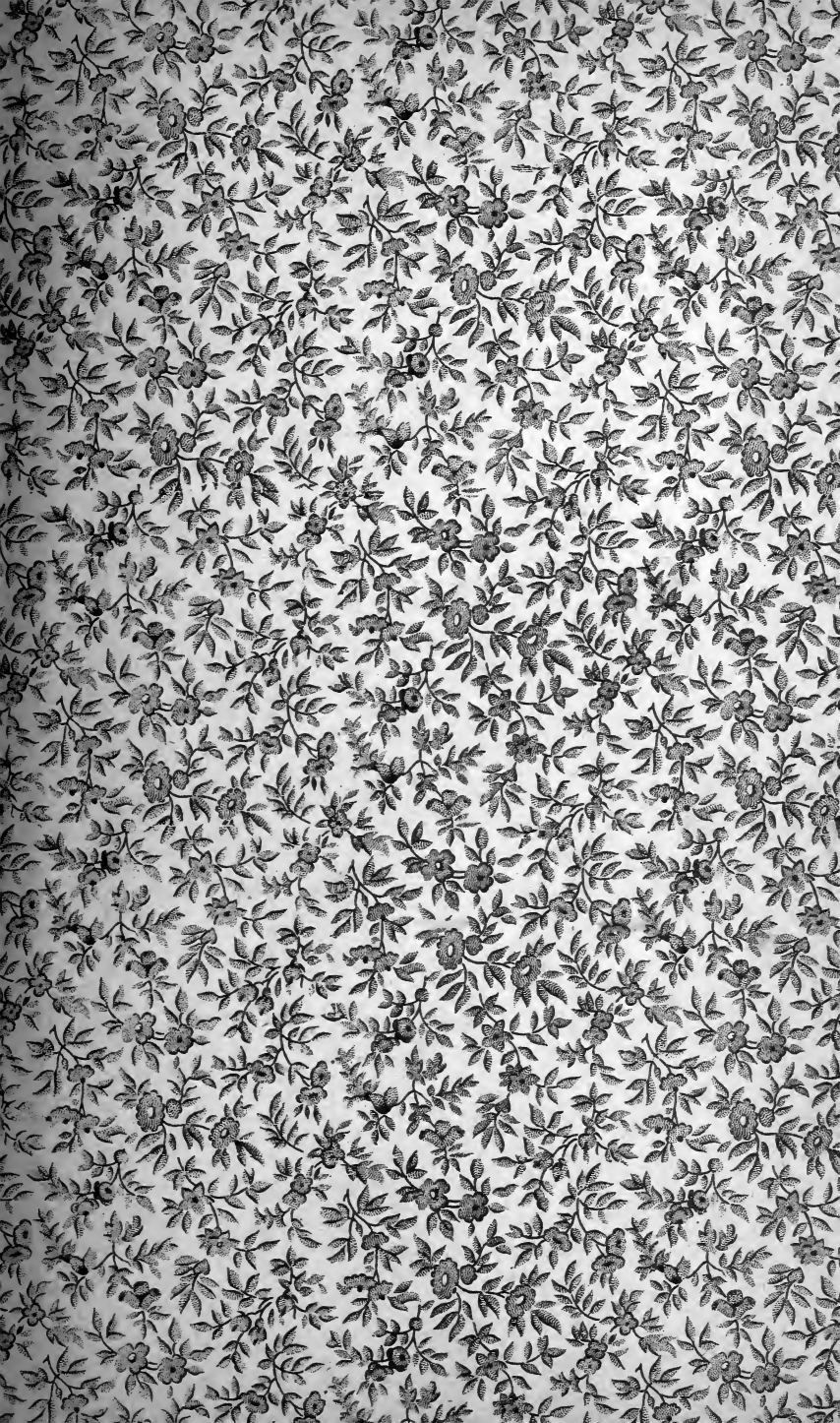
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

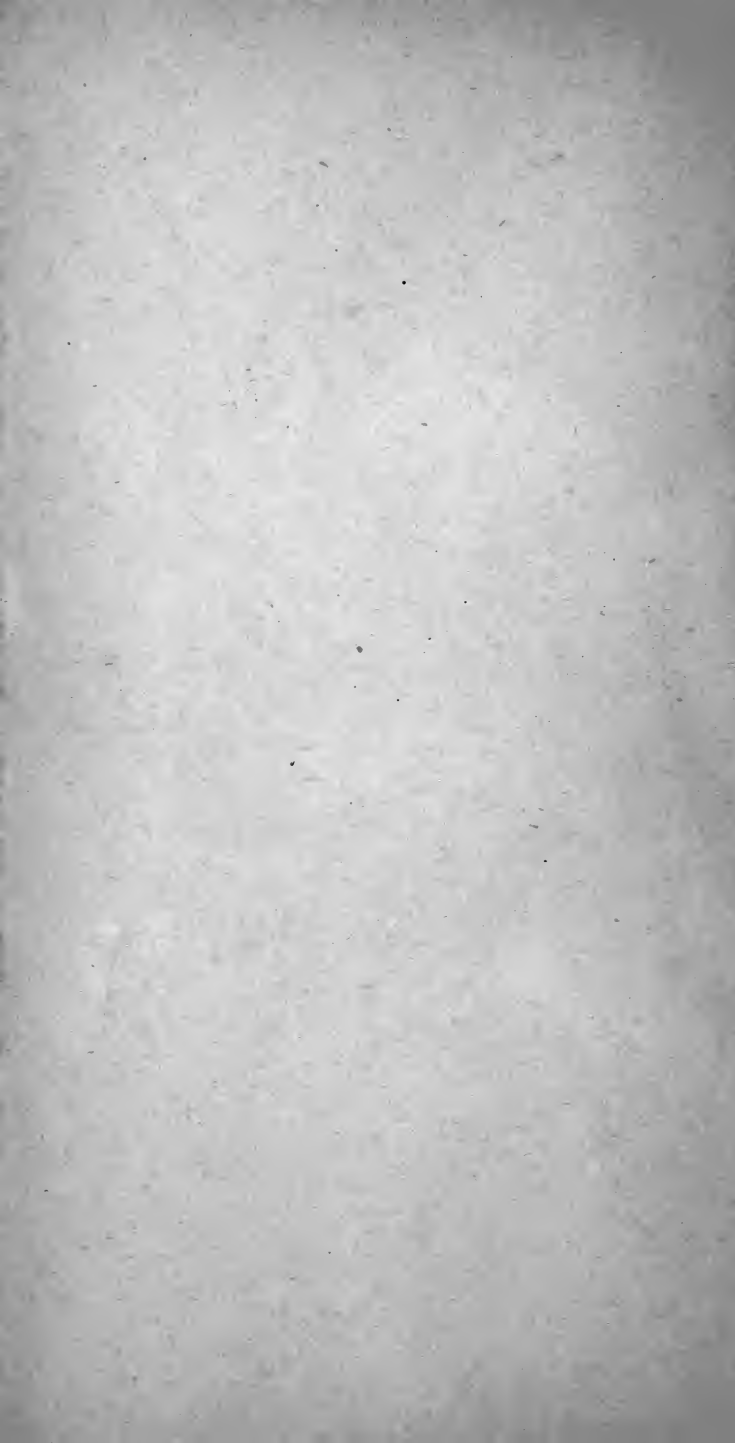
BX 6495

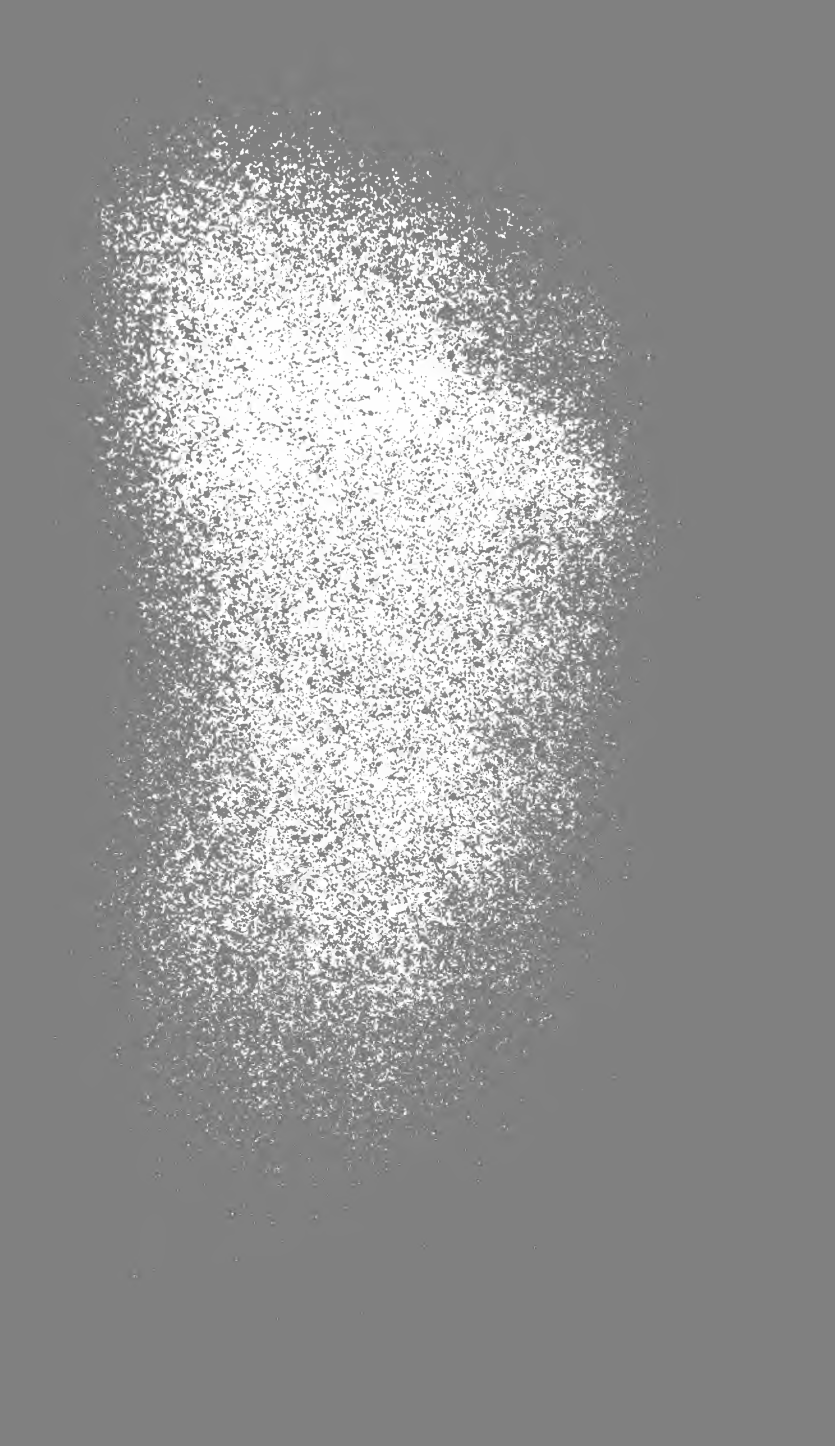
Chap. Copyright No.

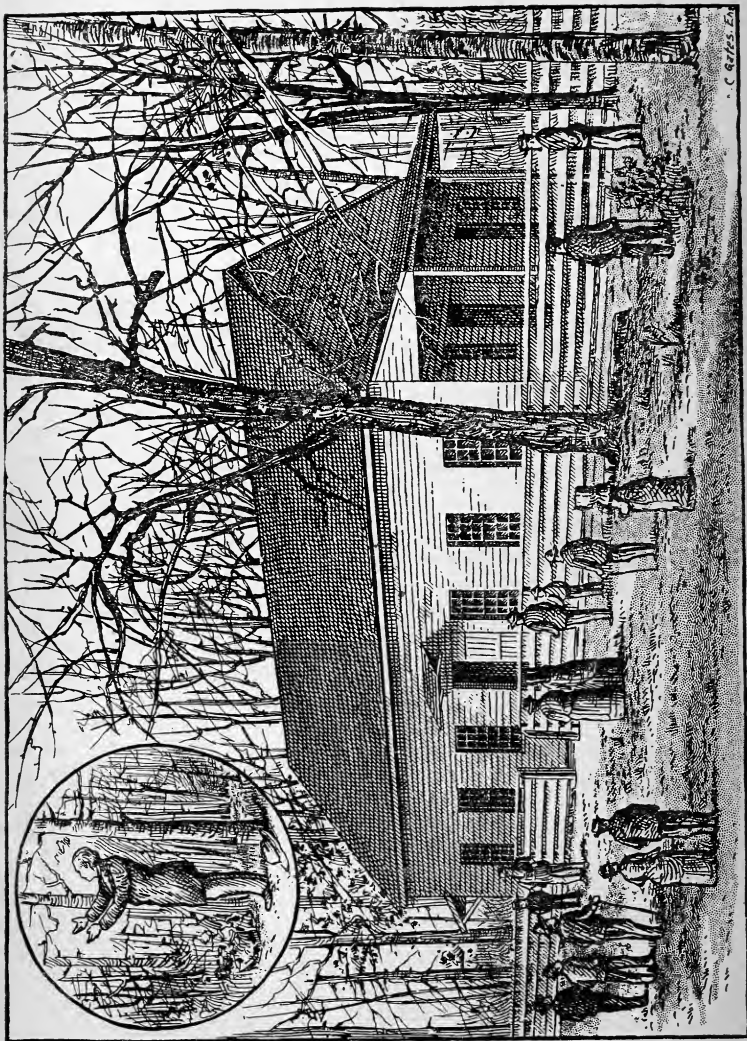
Shelf, P57A3

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









BETHANY CHURCH.

(BEFORE SERVICE.)

FIVE YEARS

IN

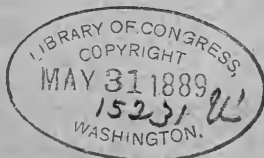
SOUTH MISSISSIPPI

*Recd. by
T. S. Powell*

BY

T. S. POWELL, A. M.

Student in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; formerly
resident and pastor in South Mississippi.



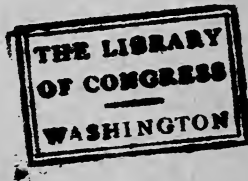
CINCINNATI

STANDARD PUBLISHING COMPANY

1889

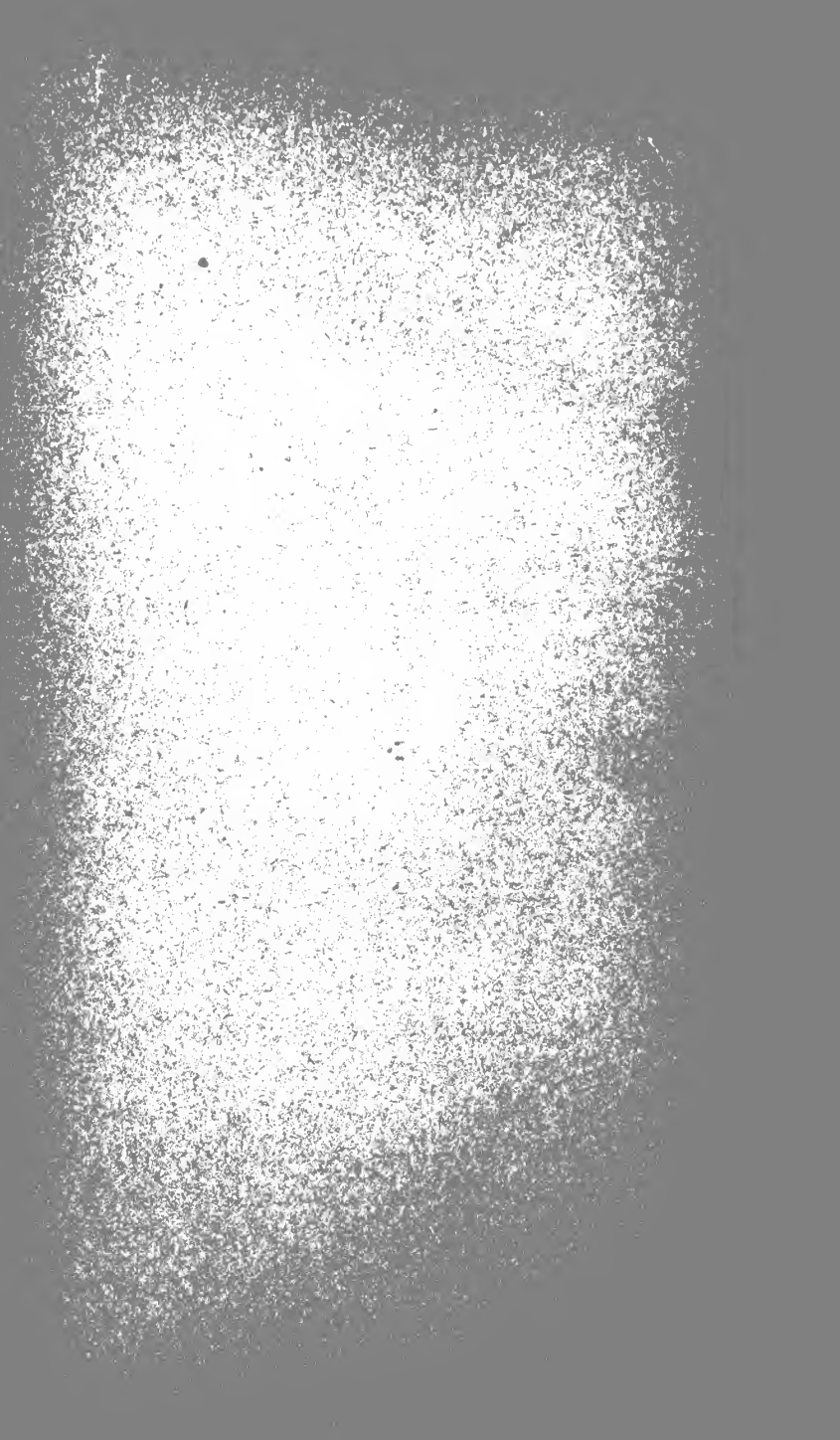
BX6495
P57A3

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1889, by
T. S. POWELL,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.



TO THE BRETHREN AND SISTERS AMONG WHOM MY EARLY
LIFE HAS BEEN SPENT, WHO HAVE BEEN THE WIT-
NESSES, SUPPORTERS, AND PARTNERS OF MY WORK, AS A
TOKEN OF HIGH REGARD AND SINCERE AFFECTION,

This Volume is Dedicated.



PREFACE.

Some five years ago, while yet engaged in plans and labors for the religious development of a section of country in South Mississippi, I conceived the purpose of writing an account of those labors.

The motive which prompted me was not, I trust, so much a sense of self-importance as of the importance of the work in that section. There was presented the prospect of a large territory of Christianized country, pre-vaillingly Baptist, yet comparatively undeveloped in benevolence, and resting in a rather low state of religious activity. The progress which I felt bound to urge was in the line of more frequent public services and increased activity in all the departments of church work. To develop the latent energies of the churches which I served, to marshal their forces for more general efforts, and inspire them with greater zeal for the blessings of religion upon themselves, and strengthen their aspirations to extend the saving influence to more destitute communities, was the wish which lay nearest my heart; to this end my efforts were chiefly directed. Nor was I alone in the pursuance of this special object. It was evident that other brethren and pastors were diligently working in the same line.

Having been identified with the work in that section for nearly five years, and feeling yet an almost undiminished interest in the progress of the cause there, I have been unwilling that the knowledge of those labors should be forgotten, or that the proof of my interest should pass away with my exit from the country.

The form which I have chosen for my narrative is that of an autobiographical treatise, in which I have interwoven with personal experiences discussions of such questions as seem to me to deserve and to demand especial attention. I am impressed that a progressive movement, especially in country churches, is called for by the times in which we live. And I have not considered it presumptuous to hope that the progress advocated in this treatise might be recognized as looking in the proper direction. The personal adventures which are herein recorded I have hoped might not detract from the more grave parts of the narrative, and at the same time might bring to light experiences which are more or less common to hundreds of youths in this country who are striving for higher attainments in culture and usefulness.

The book has been written for the most part during my seminary course, in such times as I dared to take from my studies, with a part of two vacations. I am indebted to Dr. Wm. H. Whitsitt for a careful perusal of the main body of the manuscript, and for many valuable suggestions, especially as to style.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE.....	v., vi
INTRODUCTION	ix-xiv
CHAPTER I.	
School at Brandon.—Decision to enter the Ministry.....	1-5
CHAPTER II.	
Teaching at Dry Creek.—Course at Mississippi College...	6-14
CHAPTER III.	
Leaving College.—Causes and Consequences.....	15-23
CHAPTER IV.	
Call to Bethany Church, Lawrence County.—Survey of the Community	24-28
CHAPTER V.	
Visit to Bunker Hill, Marion County.—A View of the Re- ligious Situation.....	29-40
CHAPTER VI.	
Settling Down to Work.—The Pastoral Relation.....	41-46
CHAPTER VII.	
The Question as to What Pays Considered.—The Churches' Responsibility to Christ	47-58
CHAPTER VIII.	
Protracted Meetings: Suggestions as to their Desirability and Abuse	59-68
CHAPTER IX.	
Afflictions at Clinton	69-77

CHAPTER X.

	PAGE
Removal.—Mt. Carmel, Salem, Williamsburg, Columbia, Poplar Springs	78-89

CHAPTER XI.

The Custom of Making Annual Calls.—School at Williams- burg.—The Pastor as a School teacher.....	90-101
---	--------

CHAPTER XII.

Formation of Pearl Leaf Association.—The Question How to Maintain Church Prosperity Considered.....	102-107
--	---------

CHAPTER XIII.

School-teaching at Mt. Carmel.—Church Sociables and Festivals	108-126
--	---------

CHAPTER XIV.

Campaign on the Buoy.—Meeting of Associations.—School at Blountville	127-142
---	---------

CHAPTER XV.

The Last Year in South Mississippi.—Off to Louisville...	143-155
--	---------

CONTENTS OF SUPPLEMENT.

Introduction	157-158
Letters.....	159-173
Essays for Children.—	
“The Recollection”	174-177
“The Hotel”	178-181
“The Instrument”	182-185
“The Key”	186-188
A Song to the Cotton Plant	189-190

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.*

The day from which I reckon my existence is the 16th of May, 1855. The place of my birth is a small farm situated on Steen's Creek, in the southwestern part of Rankin County, Mississippi. The farm, at that time the possession of my father, is now owned by Mr. H. Boatler. It has been known at different times as the Slater place and the Riley place. My most lovely mother (*nee* Malinda Cole) was the youngest child but one of Henry and Sallie (Cox) Cole. The father was of Swiss, the mother of Swedish descent. This union was formed in Spartanburg district, South Carolina, about the time of the Creek war under Jackson (1813-14), in which the male member had some experience. In 1821 the couple moved to Madison County, Alabama. The father having died in 1833, as the result of a fall from a horse, in 1848 the family, consisting of the mother, three sons, and one daughter, moved to Rankin County, Mississippi. They were accompanied by three married daughters and their families, four having been left behind. My mother was reared with the advantages of a common school education. In early life she united with the Baptist Church at Dry Creek, of which Elder Cader Price was then pas-

* The writing of this chapter was suggested by Dr. Whitsitt.

tor. In her twenty-second year she was married to Vincent Theophilus Powell.

I trace the genealogy of my father's family to Charles Powell, who came from Wales to North Carolina in the middle or latter part of the eighteenth century. He was of Welsh, and his wife of English, extraction. Their two children were left orphans, when the son James was ten years old. He was born in 1767, and was reared to young manhood by Jack Ivens. He early went to South Carolina, where he was married to Lucretia Magee, a lady of Scotch parentage. When nineteen years of age he, with his wife, was baptized by Elder Vincent Thorpe into the fellowship of Peedee Church, on the Little Peedee River. He began to preach in his twenty-first year, and was ordained by the same church and pastor. Thence he moved to Georgia, and from there to Wayne County, Mississippi, in 1810. After a residence of about six years each in that and Green County, he finally settled in Simpson. He was a man of liberal education, and from what I have been able to learn of his work, of considerable strength and quite extensive labors in the ministry. He was the founder of several churches, and filled out an unusually long life in the pastorate. Among his colleagues in the ministry were Jno. P. Martin, Norvel Robertson, Sr., James Murray, Dr. Collins, Wm. Chambers, and others whose names I have not at hand. The pioneer preachers of South Mississippi did their work well. His wife was a noble, pious, Christian woman. To them were born twelve children, all of whom but one attained to matur-

ity. The family, as regards the things of this world, were in good circumstances. In 1841 his wife died. He afterwards married Mary Barnett, and in his old age became the father of two sons. He died November 17th, 1851. He reposes with his first wife in the cemetery of Strong River Church.*

It will be seen from the above that I claim kin with the Welsh, Swiss, Swedes, Scotch, and perhaps some other nationalities of less renown. There might be expected from the mingling of such blood a person of a rare combination of qualities. The defect in this respect most obvious to myself is the want of a drop of Irish blood to give me a grain of wit. It will appear also how I came to bear the name of Theophilus; though my other given name has been a puzzle to many, as it was not long since to a couple of young ladies whom I unwittingly set to guessing what the S in my name stood for. They guessed almost everything in the range of English synonyms, either sweet or sour, to my utter disgust, but never staggered upon the right word. It will be plain enough, however, when it is borne in mind that it was about the close of the brilliant career of Jehu L. Shuck, the first missionary of the Southern Board to China, that I made my appearance on the western hemisphere. It is evident that both my father and myself were named for a Baptist preacher, and we both acknowledged the obligation. I can not, however, in another respect claim

*I am indebted for most of the information concerning my grandfather's family to the only surviving daughter, Mrs. Hephzia Bishop, of Westville, Miss.

the same fidelity; for only a short time before his death my father expressed the belief that after the order of David and Solomon in building the Temple I would carry out the earnest desire of his heart when a young man, to go as a missionary to China, which circumstances prevented him from realizing; yet who knows but that, if I should be granted a successful life, I may not fulfill this obligation also?

My father, the ninth child of James and Lucretia Powell, was born November 15th, 1820. He received an ordinary education from the country schools, which was supplemented by some experience in teaching. In 1838, while afflicted with dyspepsia, and after a long struggle with gloom and skepticism, he professed conversion and was baptized by his father. In '41 the year of his mother's death, he was ordained to the ministry. He did not, however, devote himself exclusively to his calling, but, as was not uncommon in that section among preachers of the last generation, he strove to make a living and even to acquire property by the work of his hands. He was first married (1844) to Mihuldah Cora Sutton, whom, with three children, the fruits of this union, he survived. He moved to Rankin County in 1847. On the twelfth day of April, 1853, he was married the second time, as stated above. Of the ten children of this family, six at present remain. The second of all is the writer of this sketch. In 1856 my father moved to Western Texas. He was the first to preach the gospel in Live Oak County of that State.

The Texans came to hear him clad in their prairie dress and their coat of arms. As he was not pleased with this frontier life, he returned the next year to Rankin County, Miss., where he lived continuously till the winter of '69. The family were in comfortable circumstances up to the time of the war. My father supported the cause of secession. His two older sons (Warren and Baron) volunteered at the ages respectively of sixteen and fourteen, and were three years in the Confederate service. After the close of the war he manifested almost no interest in politics. The five years from '70 to '75 were spent in the Mississippi swamp, Leflore County. While sojourning here he preached regularly, and was instrumental in constituting two or three churches, which were composed for the most part of renters of the then floating population. The churches went to pieces after his return to the "hills." During his life he was pastor of various churches in Rankin and Simpson Counties. He delighted also to preach in communities which were destitute. Under him the little church of Cana in South Rankin was constituted; and being then the proprietor of a steam sawmill, he donated most of the material for building the house. He was a friend to missions and to education. Self-reliance, hard work, benevolence, and an abiding sense of humility were some of the traits which marked his character. His death occurred on the 19th of April, 1881. It would be inexcusable affectation to propose any eulogy on so unpretending a life. Impartial opinion, however, will not deny this simple trib-

ute. There were few men in his station who could claim a greater number of personal friends, and that, I presume, because he was an honest, faithful, sympathetic and conscientious man. His death was followed by that of my mother, on November 7th, 1882. One of the most comforting recollections connected with the last year of her life is that she was a member of a mission society, and contributed regularly to its support.

Appreciative offspring, it may be expected, will eagerly seize and warmly cherish any pleasing memento of the life and deeds of departed parents.

South Mississippi is the home of my people. May it ever be a goodly land, religious, prosperous, and happy.

T. S. POWELL.

FIVE YEARS IN SOUTH MISSISSIPPI.

CHAPTER I.

School at Brandon.—Decision to enter the Ministry.

In the winter of '76 I left the circle of that family with which are connected the associations most lovely and sacred of this life. The father, already stooping under the burden of years and worn with manly toil, was looking toward the grave. The mother, beautiful and gay in youth, was now fading and careworn, yet cherishing an ever growing fondness for the dear ones that were hers. A group of trustful children gathered around them from the prattling baby boy to the bustling young man of eighteen, and the mild contemplative daughter just stepping upon the highway of womanhood. Sweet home! I did not then know what is orphanage; nor what are the thoughts of one cast alone upon the world. I envy the choice of two older brothers who did not leave the parental roof till they were near thirty. Had I a father and mother now, it seems to me I should desire to dwell with them forever.

The occasion of my leaving home was the prospect of higher education. I had an uncle, Henry S. Cole, living near Brandon, who proposed to board me that I

might attend the Brandon school, and I, in turn, should give my vacant hours in service about the place. He was then engaged in the practice of law, and was a cripple, having lost a limb in the battle of Shiloh. He afterwards proved a most true and disinterested friend. The offer, I need not say, was accepted. I had long been conscious of a thirst for knowledge, and now was presented an opportunity for gratifying it.

Brandon was one of the oldest towns in the State. It made no small pretensions to refinement and to leadership in politics and the bar. The town was well supplied with churches, and enjoyed the advantages of a fine female school. The male school did not exist under so favorable auspices. The present teacher was Eld. J. M. Lewis, formerly of Kentucky. He was a Baptist Minister of no mean reputation as a pulpit orator.

My domestic surroundings were most pleasant. It was the golden period of the family with which I lived, and I shared in no small degree the social spirit which pervaded the happy household. One consideration alone tended to mar my pleasure—the drudgery which was connected with my situation. To cultivate the garden and orchard, to tend the stock, and perform generally the duties of an outdoor attendant was an unpleasant though not unprofitable drill; for the path of ascent is by weary steps. There seems to be no first class passage up the hill of higher usefulness.

I entered school to work. My recess at noon was just long enough to swallow my lunch; I had not then considered the importance of digestion. The only whole night's work, I remember ever to have done was in this year. A mischievous mule, in the spring, got to breaking into the oat field. It was my duty to mend the

fence, but I had no notion of stopping school to attend to it. So I resolved to mend the fence at night. After the family retired I jumped out of my room at the window to escape notice ; and, until the gray dawn appeared, carried a quarter of a mile and made fence. Health was not then taken into account.

The session closed. Mr. Emmet Thomas, a recent graduate of Mississippi College, opened a summer school at Brandon, which I attended, and under him I commenced reading *Æsop's Fables* in Latin. In the fall Dr. Lewis resumed his school which continued until midwinter, when he received a call from Frankfort, Ky. This took him from us. Under him I began the long continued studies of Greek, Latin and Rhetoric. Soon a new teacher was employed, Prof. —. He appeared to be a stranger. I was informed that he was a finished scholar, and very severe on the boys, which, it was thought, was what the boys of Brandon needed. On entering the schoolroom I found this gentleman in the chair, looking very grand and dignified.

He was surrounded by a crowd of noble boys. It was evident that Brandon was doing its best for him. Not a day passed but a whipping came to a half dozen or more. He had been advised to lay it on, and not the largest escaped, if he was the least unruly. But it soon became evident that his forte was in the use or rather the abuse of the hickory. He was a perfect imposture, the most presumptuous hypocrite I ever had any thing to do with. When I was fully convinced of his hypocrisy, I asked him one day to exclude the boys from the schoolroom, for a private interview. When we were alone, I asked, "You say you are a graduate from a college?" He said, "Ye-es." "Did you not use keys

and translations to help you through?" "Well, ye-es." "Well I have discovered, Professor, that you do n't seem to understand Latin, Greek and Mathematics." He turned white and trembling, said, "Please do n't expose me; I have a wife and a little child." I assured him I would not, further than I was bound to; for up to this time I had sustained him in points of discipline when I had been referred to. In a few days the Professor disappeared from town.

This was the last attempt at a school in Brandon for some time. I now secured a room in the court house, and with another young man, Mr. Davis Berry for a roommate, I pursued my studies. Mr. Buchanan, an excellent scholar and member of the Brandon Bar, and a very pleasant gentleman, rendered me valuable assistance in Latin and Greek.

The time at length had fully arrived when an important decision must be made. The question, "What shall be my pursuit in life?" was demanding an answer. Of late it had been foremost in my mind. I had early felt that I should preach, and such impressions had followed me, but they did not become serious until I left home; since then they had been growing upon my attention. It was a question not to be decided by choice, but by conviction. I believed fully in a divine call to the ministry, and had some appreciation of the responsibilities and trials of a minister's life. I regarded it as the highest of callings, and at times when I contemplated it was animated with lofty feelings. At other times I was constrained to put aside all such thoughts. A feeling of unworthiness came upon me. From considerations of worldly comfort and pleasure I should have chosen some other line of life, if I had felt free to do so; indeed, I had some

thoughts of studying law, but this seemed a dry pasture. It appeared that I had a theological bent of mind, for I delighted in theological study, nor was I unwilling to enter the ministry if I could be sure it was my duty. This was the issue on which I knew the matter must be decided. I felt sure that God had appointed me to this work. His grace was sufficient for me; I sought light from above, and light came, but not in any miraculous or phenomenal way. The fleece of Gideon did not avail me, nor was I favored with any vision or verbal communication. Gradually, almost imperceptibly my doubts disappeared. This way lay open before me, and all other ways were closed. I had a consciousness of duty which gave me entire satisfaction. I felt, too, that it was the only pursuit in which I could be measureably useful, successful, or happy.

CHAPTER II.

Teaching at Dry Creek.—Course at Mississippi College.

The following summer (1877) I taught school at Dry Creek Church, a place hallowed by associations of early school days, and by my first religious impressions. Most of those who were, during my childhood, leaders in the church services had now passed away, but many of my schoolmates remained, and some of them were my pupils. One of these I can not pass without special mention, Miss Venie McIntyre, who, though reared an orphan, having lost both father and mother in early childhood, with unsurpassed zeal and perseverance, followed also by her sister, made her way to the highest attainments in one of the first Christian colleges in the State. There has never come under my notice a more brilliant youthful mind, or a more perfect example of noble, aspiring womanhood.

I boarded with a good old deacon, Lewis Howell, who has since passed to his reward. Here, in the early fall, I was licensed to preach. I now began to arrange to go to Clinton. The means to defray expenses were wanting. All this fall, while teaching, I studied to invent something which would make me a little fortune. My hostess sometimes complained that, about midnight, she observed the lamp burning brightly in my room while I was lying on the floor fast asleep. I did not tell her that I was struggling to conceive a machine which would bring me some money. But much as I

desired to make a raise this way, I was bound to acknowledge that my inventive powers would not work. The only alternative was to borrow money. That favor I obtained from Mrs. Martha McIntyre, through my uncle, who became security, I giving an insurance on life.*

I entered college about the 1st of January, 1878. This was like ascending an elevated plateau, from which can be obtained a better view of the surrounding country. It marked an era in my life. The door to the world's museum of science and literature was open; I might walk in and avail myself of the experience and fellowship of the world's great spirits. I began to have thoughts of a life more elevated and enlarged; more and more clearly it appeared that the worthiest men had been those who had labored both to improve their advantages and to employ their talents most unselfishly to benefit the race. The force of example is strong, and I came more and more under an influence which drew me on to make the most of life and to be of the greatest possible benefit to my fellow-men, who might be less favored than myself.

The faculty, during my course at Mississippi College, consisted of W. S. Web, President and Professor of Mental and Moral Science; H. C. Timberlake, Professor of Latin and Greek (Geo. Wharton afterwards filled this chair); B. H. Whitfield, Professor of Natural Sciences; Mr. T. Martin, Professor of Mathematics (afterwards P. H. Eager). The course has since been enlarged, other professorships added and various changes

*I am especially indebted to Mr. A. B. Stubblefield for financial assistance, to the amount of \$100, rendered me during one session at college; also to the Strong River Association, for the same amount.

have occurred in the faculty. Prof. Timberlake has been transferred, as we believe, to heaven's school of the redeemed. He was a kind-hearted and genial gentleman, as well as a good scholar and instructor. Dr. B. H. Whitfield, also, has left us, than whom I have not known a more noble, zealous, Christian man and teacher.



C. H. TIMBERLAKE.

It is well nigh impossible to estimate the benefits to a growing, expanding mind, of a college course well planned and well studied. It lays a foundation for the future building of character, broad and solid, which can scarcely be obtained otherwise, even by the most favorable drill of circumstances. The design of such a course is not to immediately prepare one for some particular business, nor primarily to store the mind with

useful knowledge; but more important than either of these, it is intended to cultivate all the mental and moral powers, by training the mind to develop strength, to give one mastery of himself, so that he can bring all his powers to bear upon any undertaking. The fact that some men have attained to wonderful success without such advantages, while it shows that skill and appli-



B. H. WHITFIELD.

cation to business is indispensable, proves nothing against education; and, on the other hand, that some men of finished education make first-class failures, argues nothing against education; it rather proves the necessity of business tact, industry, and diligence to all men, whether educated or uneducated. Besides, there are other benefits connected with higher education. It increases one's intelligence as it widens his range of

knowledge. It prepares him to wield a greater influence, and must be a source of pleasure to himself as well as to all with whom he is associated. Men toil to polish the gems that are found in the earth, and we admire the work of their hands. Should not every youth labor to cultivate and polish himself? Many a young man who takes pride in fine live-stock gives absolutely no attention to self-culture. Many a young lady, who will spend much of her time dreaming about her beauty of face and form, thinks nothing of the importance of cultivating her inner self.

How far short of a proper appreciation of higher education do those young men fall, who talk thus: "Well, I don't expect to be anything but a farmer. I must work for my living. I don't think much education is necessary for one who is going to do manual work." This would be true if you were an earth worm; but you are not an earth worm. God has given you talents, capable of great improvement, and shall you not make the most of them? A certain eminent man* has said that there is nothing worth striving for but character. This means, if you have the proper character everything else will come; and that is true in whatever occupation you may engage.

These remarks are not designed to discourage young persons who can not enjoy collegiate advantages. Many a man has educated himself during leisure hours, by assistance of such private instruction as he could obtain, or even with his books alone. Much less would I disparage those who have been so unfortunate as to have no early opportunities. But there are so many advan-

* Fr. Francis Wayland.

tages in attending a well equipped institution of learning that no young man or young lady who can possibly enjoy them can afford to miss them. When I have put the question to myself, "Why should others have the advantage of me?" I have not been able to answer it satisfactorily.

Clinton was to me the Grove of Academus, with its pleasant walks and private meditations. At the same time it was a school of the prophets. I enjoyed the influence of kind and generous professors, and associated with many noble young men. The literary society of which I was a member; the Crino Theological Society, meeting on Saturday; every Saturday night the Young Men's Prayer Meeting, in which Dr. Whitfield was a prominent and permanent figure, and the missionary meeting once a month, were means of social and religious culture. One circumstance alone contributed to my humiliation and embarrassment. It kept me from intercourse with society, and frequently from religious service. Ever since our first parents committed that woeful blunder, human nature has demanded a garb in which to clothe herself when she appears before the public eye, and the Adam of the nineteenth century has made such an advance on the simple taste of his primogenitor, that the fig leaf expedient would not be countenanced for a moment among respectable people. It makes comparatively little difference as to a man's dress, provided he has plenty of money in his pocket. He can then rest easy; but when he has neither money nor clothes, the chagrin is almost intolerable. This fact will help to explain the anomaly frequently remarked on, that tenants not uncommonly dress better than their landlords. It is sincerely hoped that no other youth

may ever be hampered by this fortune; but if any should, I trust he will be comforted by a brother's experience.

Central Female Institute contributed much of interest to the town of Clinton, and especially to the students of the male college. I studied German here one year under its German Professor of Music. So favorable an impression did the faculty and students of this institution make on my mind, that I shall be bound always to look upon its *alumnæ* as superior.

I should not wish to be considered in the least sentimental; yet it would, perhaps, be unjust not to confess that I did occasionally watch from a distance the light in a certain window and pray to the skies that such and such a thing might be.

My low-winged muse takes her first flight from the top of

THE SALUS TREE.*

Mt. Salus grows a tree,
Its rising form you see.
I'll tell to you its story,
And unfold its future glory.
A shrub it was of culture,
Nurtured of gentlest virtue,
Of scions named the first,
By all in wisdom versed.
The common choice proclaimed,
Its worth abroad was famed.
Not for itself alone
This rarest plant was grown;
The time had fully come,
Its fruit life must be begun.
From the bed was it transplanted,

* Mt. Salus is the original name of the hill on which Mississippi College stands.

Where for air it long had panted,
For the tempest never blew
In the nursery where it grew.
To the soil it was delivered
By hands that now are withered.
Watered, too, long ago,
From founts since ceased to flow.
By drouth and storm assaulted,
Long it stood and faltered.
So stubborn was every foe,
Its triumph must be slow.
At length it gained a foothold
Down in the bed clay mold.
And now in joy it brings
From earth's deep hidden springs,
And above it shoots its branches
Far out where the sunbeam dances.
They bend and play in the zephyrs;
And laugh, as they throw sweet kisses
Up to skies of blue,
Whence all its praise is due.
A spirit lifts the curtain,
The vision I trow is certain :
I see far down the ages
At oft recurring stages.
As the spring life comes and goes
The tree still blooms and grows ;
Under its spreading boughs,
Where echo silent vows,
As the seasons hie away,
The children meet for play.
Within its ample bowers
They wreath the sweet vernal flowers ;
In its darkened shadow they stroll
And whisper what ne'er was told ;
On its bowing limbs they swing,
They sport and shout and sing ;
And, lest my lay be long,
This is their simple song :

“Heighho, heighho, the Salus tree!
In whose rejoicing shade we play;
Our fathers, alas! have passed away,
But this result of their toils we see.

“All hail! We greet you, lovely tree,
Your praise we'll ever sing
For the grace and joy you bring;
Earnest of good forever be.

“Hurrah! let live the grand old tree
Whose glory crowns our hill sublime.
Its fruit it lends to every clime,
And a fragrance pours from hill to sea.”

CHAPTER III.

Leaving College.—Causes and Consequences.

My stay at Clinton was ended. I had been there three sessions. Apprehension of coming responsibilities had caused me to rush through more rapidly than was to my advantage. My father's health had, for some time, been failing, and the painful fact could not be ignored that the end was drawing near. In the month of January, '81, I received, one morning, a note, written in the well-known hand after which I had made my first letters, telling me that either I or my brother, younger than myself, must come home.

I reached Brandon about two o'clock that night. It was fifteen miles home, and a deep snow had fallen. It was quite a tramp, but the first rays of the morning sun that saluted my eyes bathed also in golden light the spot rendered sacred by the trials and toils of devoted parents. A few months of anxiety passed away in ceaseless watchings and eager hope, but spring brought no relief. The sun has now set behind the western mountains, the shades of evening grow longer and deeper with darkness. The angel of death has entered and perched on the couch of the first born. He receives the summons, and dies.

Thus passed from the stage of action the life after which my own is modeled. My father was a Baptist minister, not of distinction. He was known and felt in a comparatively narrow sphere, yet none the less is he

appreciated by those who shall bear the impress of his teaching through this life and in the world to come. Should I ever achieve anything worthy, it will be due to the development of those principles which I received through him, my first and most successful instructor.

My mother was now a widow, her children orphans ; upon me, * as the oldest, fell the responsibility of caring for the family. I did not shrink from the duty. Possibly I did not fully appreciate the weight of the responsibility. Any way, I received it rather with eagerness ; for I felt that in caring for mother, brothers and sisters, I was not only serving those who were most dear to me, but honoring him whom it was my ambition to honor. If it can not be said that my course was wise, there remains to me this consolation—I was filial and devoted.

Four churches, Cato, Gum-Springs, Zion-Hill and Cana, were left destitute by my father's death. The three latter immediately called me to be their supply. I received ordination from Dry Creek Church, the latter part of this spring ('81), and entered upon the pleasant work of the pastorate in a community which, though not wealthy, was composed of good, honest and appreciative people ; my duties, however, were not limited to this sphere. The little rented farm looked to me for management. I undertook also a neighborhood school. Added to this was the pursuit of my college studies. The result was, I made nearly a failure in a crop, and did not give entire satisfaction in the school-room, but stood my final examinations, and my churches would have called me for the next year. Religiously, it was a pleas-

* The reference on page 1 to older brothers is to half-brothers.

ant year; my churches experienced some revival, and for aught I know, I might have remained here in a quiet country pastorate. I had, already, while at Clinton, dreamed of a home there.

That place, to my mind, represented beauty, culture, virtue and religion. I had no more pleasing thought than that my parents should live at Clinton; and now, that it had devolved on me to devise plans for the welfare of the family, my thoughts of a home for my mother at Clinton grew and matured. I hoped that she would enjoy the society of such a place, and that her children would be reared under influences the most favorable. When I made the suggestion to her she was at first elated; but afterwards she became doubtful, and said she reckoned she must give up the idea of going to Clinton. But I, confident in my plans and purposes, assured her that all difficulties would be removed. She replied that she would say nothing more. I succeeded in raising funds, purchased a valuable lot, one mile from Clinton, and by the first of March had a house so nearly completed that it might be occupied. I found generous friends * who assisted me far beyond what might have been expected.

As my dwelling neared completion, I began to look about for a location. I desired a pastorate and a school, if necessary, from which I might occasionally visit the family, and by which I should be enabled, with my brother's assistance, to sustain them until they were securely settled. I was referred by the Lumbly brothers to Lake Village, in Arkansas. The Baptist Church there was without a pastor. After some correspondence

* David Rankin, of Rankin County, and Judge E. W. Cabaniss, of Clinton.

with the deacon I concluded to visit the place. It was in the time of the overflow of '82. The Mississippi was a living sea from hills to hills. A day and night's ride from Vicksburgh brought me to the landing, seven miles from the village. At this landing my curiosity was gratified at seeing some Chinamen, the first I had ever met. I employed a negro boy to take me farther in a skiff, and a most delightful ride we had. I reached the little city on the lake in the afternoon, with only twenty-five cents in my pocket. I was compelled to pay the oarsman partly with a new linen collar. I remained a few days, making the house of Bro. Jno. G. Simms my home; preached on Sunday to a thin audience, visited a few families, and prepared to return. I had determined to work my way back, and say nothing to the brethren. But when I left, Bro. Simms handed me five dollars, and the brother who carried me to the landing did the same. My visit was fruitless; this was the last I heard of Lake Village.

Next, through his advertisement for a teacher and preacher, I came into correspondence with Bro. Van Norman, of Amite County, and at his suggestion I visited Galilee Church in his community. On arriving, unacquainted, at Summit, which was the nearest point on the railroad, I inquired for the Baptist minister, and was directed to the house of Elder Schofield. I had never met him, but knew something of him from reputation. I reached his house before breakfast. I found him a great talker and a ready wit. He made me feel that he was really glad to see me. After breakfast he accompanied me to the livery stable. I shall not soon forget the introduction: "Mr. ———, this is Bro. Powell, a Baptist Minister, who wants a horse for three

days, and I know from experience that Baptist preachers don't have too much money." All right; a horse secured, I was soon on the road for a journey of forty miles. It was late in the winter, and the streams were swollen by rains. In crossing one of these my horse blundered, and I somehow got off into the water. About twelve o'clock I stopped at a house for dinner. While waiting I pulled off my shoes, a right new, seven-dollar pair, and laying them carelessly too near the fire, they were parched, and thus my new shoes were ruined.

I had been directed by Eld. Schofield to call on W. Z. Lea, who lived near Liberty, and whom he described as the "bell-wether of all the Baptists" in that section. About sundown I rode up to Bro. Lea's place, walked into the house and introduced myself as Powell. I was taken immediately for a kinsman, for Mrs. Lea was a Powell. I found them to be kinsfolk indeed, whether according to the flesh or not.

The country had every appearance of having once been wealthy. I was struck with the sight of many fine mansions going to ruin; many fences and buildings were dilapidated, but the soil had the right color for fertility. On passing through Liberty I noticed the only monument which I have ever seen raised to the memory of Confederate dead.

After spending a night very pleasantly with Bro. Van Norman, I went with him to the church. It was a week day. The citizens had met to elect a teacher. My purpose was to get a school and a church. I found a gentleman on the ground of high repute as a teacher. To him they tendered the school, though I learned afterwards that he did not take it. This trip also was a failure; yet I look back on my visit to Amite, as well as

that to Lake Village, with pleasure ; I look forward also to the time when we shall meet on the other shore, when this world's work shall have been done, and we shall rest together in the paternal home.

Not long after this I chanced one day to step into the room of Elder R. A. Cooper, then a student of Mississippi College. He handed me a letter from W. M. Robertson, of Lawrence County. The letter conveyed the intelligence that Bethany Church was without a pastor, and sought reference to some one who might entertain a call. I was soon in correspondence with the church. In response to a request to visit them, I procured a pony in Clinton, and set out on horseback, a journey of seventy miles. On my way, I passed the residence of Rev. R. W. Hall, late pastor of Bethany Church, which he had been compelled to resign on account of ill health, He spoke well of the church and of the community. The second night I stopped with my cousin, J. I. Bishop, at Westville, twenty-two miles from Bethany. In the morning I secured a fresh horse through the kindness of Mr. Catchings, a young lawyer of the place, and about two o'clock I rode up to Bethany.

The church was in conference. I recognized only two persons, Misses Sallie and Lou Robertson. I had met them at Clinton. I took a seat at the end of the first bench by an elderly, tall brother, whom I afterwards knew as John Atwood. I whispered my name to the tall brother, who called out, "Brethren, Bro. Powell is here, shall we invite him up into the stand?" The voice of Deacon Frank Polk answered, "Certainly ; go up into the stand, Bro. Powell." I went up and did my best, on the text, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God."

After services and a cordial greeting of welcome from the brethren, strangers to me, but of kindred spirit, the clerk, Bro. G. W. Mikell, claimed me as his guest. On the way to his residence, five miles distant, I learned of the illness of J. J. Mikell, an elder brother. After dinner we went to the house of the sick, but failed to get there in time to make his acquaintance. As we walked into the gallery he breathed his last; and the family mourned the irreparable loss of a husband and father. Among the attendants on this occasion, saddest, perhaps, in the memory of that household, was Bro. W. M. Waller and his wife. My distinct recognition of them dates from this occasion. I ever afterwards counted them among my most honored and faithful friends.

I spent the night with the clerk and the family at his house. Some pleasant attachments were formed, which have only been strengthened by the lapse of time.

In the morning several brethren met at the house of my host to make a coffin for the deceased. These made up one hundred dollars of the salary, and sent word that they would abide by whatever the church would do. The church house was well filled. The subject was "The Law of Liberty," James i. 25. After I had finished preaching the church made a formal call. The conditions on which we agreed was one half of my time and a salary of four hundred dollars. Nearly the whole amount was raised by subscription on that day, so that I felt justified in making an appointment for two weeks from that time. My grandfather, years before, had preached in this very section, and some of the members of the church had distinct recollections of him. This gave me a recommendation which I could not otherwise have had.

I went home from church with the Misses Robertson. It was six miles to where they lived. A modest building was the house, in a retired spot, the yard shaded by ancient oaks. The feeling of a pleasant country home consecrated by many sacred associations, came over me. On the gallery I met an elderly lady with full face, cheerful countenance and kindly and generous mien. I take pleasure in introducing her to my readers as Sister Robertson. She said she was glad to welcome me to her humble home. Near her stood a slender form, slightly bent with rheumatism, but with pleasing countenance, and kind though tremulous voice. This was the only surviving son, "Billy." By his side, and supporting him was his modest, polite and devoted wife. We at-dinner and engaged for a short time in pleasant conversation. Sister Robertson told me of my grandfather, with whose memory she was familiar, and of some interesting events of the old times. But we had not long to tarry in this agreeable converse. Three o'clock was the time appointed for the burial service. So we resorted to the Mikell Cemetery, a mile distant. On a high hill, overlooking what is known as the Hooker Hollow, was gathered a company of people to see laid away in its last resting place, the body of the lamented friend and brother. The reading of a psalm, a few practical remarks on death, the certainty of its coming to all, its consequences to the wicked and the righteous; the lowering of the body in the tomb and covering with its mother earth, a song, a prayer, and the crowd dispersed.

I spent the night with Sister Robertson, and in the morning turned my face homeward. I had arranged to move my mother on my return to Clinton. About ten days later I took leave of the family in their new home,

leaving my brother, James Elroy, to keep them company while he continued his studies. My dreams were partially realized—my mother was at home in Clinton, not securely, but hopefully situated. Oh! fortune, will you smile on me?

CHAPTER IV.

A long walk, and a church at the end of it.

Friday evening before the first Sunday in April found me at Wesson, on the Illinois Central Railroad, forty miles from Bethany, without conveyance and without money. There was no alternative, I must walk. So I took my foot in my hand and began to measure the distance by the long red, pine hills which lay between me and Pearl river nineteen miles off. I had not, however, proceeded over three miles when I overtook a teamster with his yokes of thirsty oxen, and a wagon heavily laden with fertilizers evidently bound for the interior. Who should it be but Charley Wiley, an old schoolmate? It was an unexpected, but agreeable meeting. I had not seen him since he left Clinton, two or three years before and did not know that he lived in this section. He was glad that I expected to locate near where he lived and I was glad he lived there. He prevailed on me to go by and stop with him at his father's over night. I enjoyed the unrestrained hospitality of that rural home and in the morning was much refreshed. But it was still more than twenty miles to Bethany. My hope was to reach my friend Charley's place, which was seven miles from the church, and securing a horse there make it to the church in time. I got lost, however, went several miles out of the way, and when I came in sight of the church it was two o'clock and the crowd were dispersing. My appointment the next day was filled, the preliminaries

were settled, and I entered upon the responsible duties of pastor of that church which must ever be associated with the name of Norvel Robertson, Jr., one of the Mississippi's great preachers.*

Bethany Church is situated in the densely populated section on the eastern border of Lawrence County, nearly



NORVEL ROBERTSON, JR.

forty miles from a railroad, east or west, and fourteen miles from Pearl River.

The church house stands in a beautiful grove of gum trees on the Western bank of Whitesand Creek, which a few miles below unites with Little Whitesand and flows on to the river. The membership at the time of my entrance on the pastorate extended from Buoy

*Author of the popular theological treatitse known as "The Church Members Hand-book of theology."

on the east to near Silver Creek on the west, a distance of more than fifteen miles; and nearly the same distance up and down Whitesand. The people were thickly settled, on the latter creek especially, approaching the likeness of a continuous village. I have often remarked that it was the most populous country community of my knowledge in south Mississippi. The people were not wealthy, but there were many independent farmers. The soil is fertile and well cultivated; cotton, corn, oats, rice, cane, potatoes, garden vegetables and fruits were grown. It is a common opinion among farmers that too much attention is given to the cultivation of cotton to the neglect of products for home consumption. This is perhaps the reason why at some seasons of the year the country seems almost impoverished. The country is dotted over here and there with retail stores which do a credit business. This business however has not been very successful, owing to the large sales easily made, which are followed by insufficient collections. Much injury has been sustained in consequence of the agricultural lien law of the State, which gave to farmers opportunity to mortgage not only their land and stock, but also the growing crop. By that means was held out, an inducement to run extravagantly into debt, in the hope of what might be produced. It also furnished an inducement to try to shun payment of debts thus contracted and occasioned in the long run much trouble and distress.

The school interest was largely neglected, not to say, in many places, ignored. The public school was the chief dependence, and this owing partly to the shortness of the term, and partly to the looseness with which the funds were applied, failed to accomplish the best results.

Many children were growing up all over the country with the merest smattering of a common school education. This was to be charged somewhat to the insufficiency of the public schools as mentioned above, somewhat to the unprosperous condition of the country, but more largely to the want of public spirit and to the indifference of parents in respect to the education of their children? There were very few schools of any permanence save in some of the towns.

As respects religious belief, the country was largely Baptist. There were a few scattering Catholics, the result of an effort in the last few years made by the Catholics on the coast to extend their influence northward; but this movement soon came to naught. There were some Methodist families in the community, and they seemed to be increasing rather than diminishing in influence. The congregation at Bethany was first an arm of Silver Creek church some seven miles southwest. It was constituted a church in 1819 under the labors of Eld. John P. Martin, the father of Eld. M. T. Martin now of Texas. He was one of the pioneer preachers of this section. I have heard the citizens speak of the time when he walked from his home as I remember, on Holiday's Creek some ten miles off and preached to the rustic settlers under the shades of Whitesand's trees. Soon after its recognition as a church, it became the charge of Eld. Norvel Robertson, Jr., under whose care it continued until his death, a period of more than forty years. In the five or six years that followed his death, the church had been served by about as many pastors, some of them among the best in the State.

The membership now numbered about two hundred and fifty. For a few years the number had been declin-

ing. Of the membership one division was fully abreast with the times, ready for any advanced movement beyond the old lines of church work. Another part were more conservative, slow to give up the old methods, or to sanction any new movement, but good brethren, rooted and grounded in the faith. A third part consisted of those who are found, alas! in all churches, who seem to be there merely as a matter of course, just for the name of being church members, with no better aim, apparently than to escape the sinner's hell and attain to the Christian's heaven. Such was the country and community which was to be the greatest concern to me, and to claim the largest share of my affection, for the next few years.

CHAPTER V.

Visit to Bunker Hill.—A View of the Religious Situation.

As soon as I was settled, having but half my time filled up, I began to look around for other work. All the churches seemed to be supplied, but my attention was called to a community in Marion County at Bunker Hill, ten miles north of Columbia. It was spoken of as a community that gave promise of development.

Leaving the neighborhood of Bethany one Friday morning, I journeyed southward over the long ridges, bearing up their weight of evergreen pines. There was little other vegetation, and the eye had a far and wide range. In a distance of fourteen miles, I passed only three dwellings, with small farms attached. The people lived mostly on the creeks, at a distance from the public highway, which lay along the ridges. The country stretches out in undulations of hills and valleys, covered only with tall green grass and dense pine forests. Here and there the road is intersected by beautiful clear rivulets, whose waters do not prevent the eye from reaching the pebbly bottom. It has not been long since this region was infested with outlaws, who made it unpleasant to live in it.

About two o'clock in the afternoon I came upon an ancient little frame building on the slope of a high hill. Halting in front of the door, I could see the children ranged on benches, with books in hand. It reminded me of old times, when I, too, was a pupil in a school of

the pine woods. There came to the door a pleasant-looking little man, in bare feet, with his breeches legs slightly rolled up, and his black hair hanging down to his brows. I inquired, "Which way, and how far is it to Jonathan Cox's?" Said he, "Just go down there and take the first right hand, and in about a quarter take a left hand, and in a half mile more take another right hand. That'll take you there. It's about two miles." In half an hour I was riding up to Jonathan Cox's gate. I told him I was the pastor of Bethany church. "Well, get down," he replied, "Baptist preachers always find a welcome in my house." That evening there was a log-rolling in the community, and it was circulated that the pastor of Bethany church would preach at the school-house next Sunday. I was told that they had already secured the promise of a preacher for once a month, but that most of the men, from the way they talked, seemed to want him and me also. The truth is, a college preacher was somewhat of a curiosity; a scarce, not to say an unknown, commodity. There had been a prejudice against any preacher who had "rubbed his back against a college wall," but a change was already coming.

Sunday came with its hallowed quiet. The little school-house was filled. A good showing was made for a Sunday-school. The teaching, reciting, singing—all were praiseworthy. After services I was unanimously requested to preach regularly for them. I told them I would like to do so, provided they could pay me for my services. On being asked what I would expect, I said I thought they might pay me one hundred dollars. I noticed some eyes in the audience open pretty wide; for it was not customary to mention a salary, nor was it

common for a preacher to receive so much from one congregation. They concluded to ask me to come again, while they took the matter under advisement. On my next visit an outdoor conference was held, and it was agreed to offer me five dollars a trip, which would be two and a half dollars a day for actual time spent, except Sunday, for which, of course, I would not think of charg-



T. D. BUSH.

ing. As I had some desire to preach there any way, and as I knew that, if I refused their offer, it would cut off my head and strike a blow at college preachers in general, I accepted. The other preacher did not continue his appointment.

The community had already received a fresh impulse, and started on a new era without knowing the destiny to which it hastened. Holiday's Creek flowed near by.

The settlement lay along this and the branches tributary to it. The manner of life was simple and unaffected. Wealth and culture were not boasted of, but the people showed a fair degree of intelligence. They were generous and hospitable, industrious, honest, and willing to learn. Many children were growing up in the community. Young families were taking position in society. It was just such a community as might be expected to make a rapid transition from a rude, uncultivated state to one of culture and refinement.

On my return from the first visit to Bunker Hill, I searched for the home of Eld. T. D. Bush. He lived seven miles west of the line between Bethany and Bunker Hill, within one mile of Society Hill church. I reached his home about eleven o'clock on Monday morning. I had met him years before, but he was now somewhat changed. The young, raw volunteer had become a veteran, inured by many a conflict. He was large and stalwart. From an intelligent face he flashed upon you a piercing eye. His independent and manly bearing made you feel that you were in the presence of a soldier of valor. From reputation I knew him to be a progressive, zealous worker, who stood for the right. He could boast of few educational advantages, but his marked, native ability, inquiring mind, and studious habits, to a great extent, made up for this deficiency, while his strong courage, warm zeal, and ready speech made him strong in the Lord's cause.

This will be a good place to take a view of the religious condition of the country. It is dotted over with Baptist churches. The only other denomination of any considerable strength is the Methodists, and they are far inferior in numbers. The great mass of the people

hold the Baptist faith. They come out to their churches on Saturday and Sunday once a month. The preacher is most commonly from a distance often, twenty or thirty miles, or further. He comes, preaches, stays over night and returns. The religious life of the churches is feeble. Some few churches have regular Sunday-schools. Prayer-meetings are not generally kept up. In winter the houses have no convenience for heating; during a large part of the year the creeks are frequently full so as to prevent traveling, and the meetings are poorly attended. There has been much prejudice against educated preachers and against Mississippi College as the place where they are "manufactured." The churches all claim to be missionary churches, but hundreds of their members never give anything for missions. In many churches no effort is made to raise funds for any benevolent enterprise. It much fewer is there any plan of regular systematic benevolence. Lawrence County, a few years ago, secured the passage of a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors in her bounds. Covington soon followed, and Marion, which is now (1882) a cesspool of ardent spirits, is soon to follow. But there is much drinking, ungodly revelling and lawlessness even among church members, and this is true of a great many of the Baptists, who live on much as their fathers lived, feeling little responsibility as to the world's salvation—sleeping! sleeping! sleeping! Wake up, ye dreaming, dying churches! This is a progressive age. What avails your orthodox creed, if at last ye be found unprofitable servants?

This description reveals a state of spiritual decay, and to some it would be puzzling to account for. The churches do not seem to be so pure as they once were.

They are not so zealous for the truth, except for the mere form of it. They are not so full of life, and so ready to learn and to do their duty. But has there been any departure from the faith of the fathers? Are not usages and customs the same? Why then should there be any decline? The answer is to be found in the changed circumstances and in the increased responsibilities of this generation. When the country was thinly settled and undeveloped, church life was new and the membership were weak. Then there was abundant opportunity at home for utilizing all the strength of the members. Now the country has been largely taken for Christianity. Strong churches have been built up in almost every community, and there is a surplus of talent generally. The home country no longer demands all the work of which the churches are capable. Unless this surplus strength is employed and utilized it must surfeit and decay. It is not enough to do as our fathers did; our increased numbers, wealth and opportunities increase our obligations, and unless our church work keeps pace with our material strength, there must be spiritual decline. The best efforts for Christ of every member of every church are demanded. If this is too high a standard to attain, it is not too high to constantly aim at. If it is constantly aimed at while we grow in numbers and wealth, we shall also grow in spiritual power and influence. The first crying demand is for intelligent, devoted pastors; not for preachers simply, who come from a distance to meet a congregation on Saturday and Sunday, but for real undershepherds of Christ, who shall be overseers of the flock, living in the midst of their people, consecrating their time and energies to serving the people in the family circle, as well as

in the pulpit; exerting a living power for godliness by their upright life; making the pastorate their exclusive business.

Next in importance, perhaps, is the demand for more frequent church meetings. It has grown to be a kind of law among country churches to have services but one Sunday, and the Saturday before, in each month. This is clung to in some places with as much tenacity as if the Scriptures really warranted the practice. I do n't remember ever to have heard but one passage of Scripture so construed as to lend support to this custom. That is the passage concerning the tree of life (Rev. xxii. 2) which bare twelve manner of fruit and yielded its fruit every month. I once heard the opinion advanced in a sermon that this meant the preacher in his monthly ministrations to the churches. But this interpretation entirely misses the meaning of the passage, namely, that the Lord Jesus Christ is the spiritual life of his people and supplies them with nourishment at every season. It has also the misfortune of being out of harmony with the apostolic practice. The model churches of those early times had each their own pastor, and commonly a plurality of elders, and met, as it seems, for service every Lord's day. I can conceive of no sufficient reason for appropriating but one Lord's day out of every four to Christian service, except it be that this is the very least that can be done to maintain regular worship at all. No wonder that we complain of feeble spiritual life, of undeveloped churches, looseness and indifference. Query: "How shall the churches employ themselves on three out of the four Sunday in each month?"

There are many churches, it is true, which are not able to support a pastor for his whole time, nor perhaps

for half his time; yet it should be a serious question with every church as to how many Sundays in each month she can have the gospel preached from her pulpit; and when there can not be preaching in the technical sense of the word, why is it not the duty of the Church to assemble and afford exercise to such gifts as she may possess in teaching, exhortation, praise and prayer? If Sunday is a day of rest from the toils and cares of secular life, it does not seem to follow that it should be a day for staying at home and indulging in that most common of luxuries—laziness. The church prayer-meeting is sadly neglected. I know of but one country church that keeps up all the time a weekly prayer-meeting. During the protracted meeting week they are commonly considered indispensable, but at no other season. I am aware that the distance from the church at which the members often live makes it difficult to keep up a prayer-meeting in the week; but where there can not be night meetings, as in the cities, there is no reason why the church should not meet for prayer and social worship on Sundays not otherwise occupied. I must confess to an apprehension that meetings for religious service have come to be considered too much a pastime and a social convenience, rather than a divine and holy concern, that must be maintained and pushed with all our energies. The early Christians counted it a joy to suffer for Christ, while we count it extremely burdensome to do a little inconvenient work to keep the cause of Christ moving forward. Oh, for a revival of the apostolic spirit! When we consider that the well-being of the churches is dependent on the blessings of God, and that the spiritual development of their members depends on the religious services in which they en-

gage, it would seem strange that so important an institution as the prayer-meeting has fallen into disuse. The disposition prevails extensively to limit the services to the performances of the preacher, which consist usually of reading a portion of Scripture, the announcement of a couple of hymns, the sermon, another song, the benediction; and this, remember, is done only one Sunday in each month.

Another service which is slighted is the service of song. It is unnecessary to dwell upon its importance. Every pious heart will bear its own testimony to that; but in our country churches it generally goes a-begging. The singing is often unworthy of an assembly engaged in the worship of God, and tends to diminish rather than to increase the devotional spirit. I would urge nothing as to the use of instruments in church. I doubt not they may be serviceable where they are employed simply to lead, and thus aid the congregation in singing. In city churches it is the custom to pay the choir leader, and certainly the service is of sufficient importance to justify this expenditure. But whatever may be the custom in this respect, the church with the pastor certainly are under obligations to provide good music. From my observation, I think that there is not so much advantage in singing schools taught for a week or ten days as there is in regular singing services for practice in sacred music. In some places there is a disposition to practice only Sunday-school songs, and when a hymn is started nobody can sing it. Sunday-school songs are very well for Sunday-schools; but psalms and hymns for church service.

I shall say nothing in this connection as to Sunday-schools, except to point out what seems to me to be

one defect. The Sunday-schools are not made interesting enough to older people. This is the more important to be considered in churches where services are not held every Sunday. If the grown people, including the older ones, do not take an interest and attend the Sunday-school, it is because the exercises are not interesting to them. This is a defect that should be remedied. If the existing order of service is not such as to enlist older people, it should be so altered if possible, as to enlist everybody and thus furnish a means of work and worship for the whole church. And this will prove the surest way of securing the attendance of the children.

An important item is the development of Christian intelligence. In addition to literary and Sunday-schools the circulation of good books is of great benefit. It is painful to observe how many families have no books, and how many children grow up without means of study, or any inducement to read good books. A wise system of colportage is most beneficial, as it brings to the people choice religious books and gives them a chance to select for themselves. The time has come when the colporteur or agent of good books is looked upon not as a mere nuisance, or a pest, but as a valuable supplement to society.

Of equal, if not superior value, is the religious journal, for its power to create intelligence, stimulate social and business tact, instil religious sentiments and promote virtuous habits. At the same time it is a comfort and a joy. The most interesting meetings we have are experience meetings, and the choice books, likewise, are those which speak to our experience and bring home practical truths to our consciousness. The religious journal

comes to us bearing not only news items, but also instructive comments about what is going on in the world, and bits of experience clipped from the lives of living persons, and of those who are now passed away. Why do I take a religious paper? Why can I not do without it? Because it comes to be as a friend. It enters into my sympathies. It gives me advice and comfort, and strengthens me with the experience and views of others. Many of its contributors I have not seen, yet I learn to know and love them.

And what will be the benefit resulting from such increased activity? Its value will be seen in the number of souls converted and saved. In many of our churches there is a positive decline in membership for years at a time; in churches, too, which are surrounded by large numbers of unconverted. The protracted meeting is depended on for an ingathering to swell the numbers of the membership; yet with all the energy and ardor of these too often spasmodic efforts, the number scarcely increases from year to year.

The benefits of increased activity will likewise be manifest in the improved character of church members. It is often objected by men of the world that they can see no difference in conduct between church members and non-professors. This is the most powerful argument the unconverted have for resisting the efforts of the churches in their behalf. Who will say that there is no force in the argument? If there is to be no discernible difference between the life of the church member and that of the non-professor, where will appear the advantage of being a member of a church? Nothing can correct this grievous fault but enlisting the churches in more frequent and zealous service for Christ. Church

discipline in the way of trial and exclusions will not correct the evil ; it requires a discipline of a different kind.

Its benefits will further be felt in the increased intelligence and improved moral condition of the country. Crime will be less frequent. Lawlessness and irreligion must decline before increasing spirituality. Industry will prosper, for religion makes people industrious. Contentment and happiness will prevail, for these are the fruits of religion. The people will have a consciousness of serving God, which will be to them the earnest of every blessing.

Again its benefits will be apparent in the increased number of preachers and other teachers. It was a cause of earnest solicitude to our Savior that, while the harvest is so great, there are so few laborers. He bade his disciples pray that laborers be sent into the vineyard. Let there be a revival of religious work among the people of Christ, and young men will volunteer to become standard bearers of gospel ; and the dearth which is so lamented in the ministry will cease to be felt.

Finally, its benefits will be seen in the increase of missionary zeal and work. The Lord's treasury will be full from the contributions which otherwise might be spent in folly, and the now crying demand for means to send those who offering for foreign services will be satisfied.

CHAPTER VI.

Settling Down to Work.—The Pastoral Relation.

On the advice of brethren, I engaged board with Sister Robertson. She lived on the western extremity of the community, six miles from the church. The homestead was a modest one, hid away behind hills and groves. It was here that Bro. Robertson had lived, worked and died; here the family had been reared. It seemed a sacred place, hallowed by pious lives. It had been six years since the veteran soldier slept the sleep of death. The widow had continued to live here with surviving children, and a family of faithful servants. She was advanced in years, yet was quite as industrious and active as a maiden. Her face beamed with health and intelligence; she was sociable, sensible, witty. I have never seen a more saintly woman, nor a more agreeable, companionable lady. The two young ladies were models of Christian culture, having been reared in the faith of the Gospel, and with liberal advantages of education. They were to me much as sisters; the younger, Miss Lou, was frequently my companion—she was good-natured, jovial, plain, of superior intelligence. Miss Sally was a kind, advisory friend, ever ready to make thoughtful suggestions to her Brother Pastor, all of which were much appreciated. William, the youngest and only surviving son, was an intelligent young man, deservedly popular, but rheumatism had seized upon him. It had bound him with an invisible chain, from

which he was destined to suffer until freed by death. His faithful and patient wife watched by his side. This, then, was my adopted home. There could scarcely have been a more pious, or a more quiet one. I was free to roam over the fields and woods at leisure, or to sit down in the quiet study, which adjoined the sitting room of the family, where could be heard a gentle murmur of familiar voices. Here were friendship, sympathy, and kindly watch-care for others' good, and for the well-being of the church. If I did not then appreciate my fortune, I have long since learned to do so. Those holy influences linger still, fresh and potent about me. This, too, was a country home. I knew not yet of the uproarious whirl of the mad city. Here was occasion for much communion with nature and nature's God, with self, also, as well as with friendly hearts.

It was in the midst of such surroundings I commenced the duties of the pastorate. There is no calling more blessed, if it has its peculiar trials, it yields also rare pleasures. It is a work of highest benevolence, aiming at the benefit of human souls; consequently it is productive of highest joy. It sets up no goal of worldly ambition, nor promises earthly wealth or honor; but calls for unselfish devotion to the spiritual welfare of human beings, and its goal is the enduring fame of eternity. To go into this pursuit and follow it as a means of making money, would be to prostitute the Gospel of Christ and profane the temple of God. Nor is it allowable in this calling to work for the applause of men; for, in the fullest sense, the preacher is the servant of God, and he must labor to win the approval of his Lord. Nor is he permitted to seek a life of ease, if he is faithful to his calling. The salvation of souls, and the superintendence

of Christ's mission is the most responsible and urgent business in the world. He will have burdens to bear, to lead the erring to Christ, and guide aright in duty those who have put on Christ. The care of his charge will be on him, and more or less of the whole cause of Christ, according as he takes interest in the work. In addition to these things he will have the direction and the care of those who look to him for temporal support, for social and educational advantages. Oftentimes, it may be, he will have occasion to weep, when he weighs on the one hand his interest in those whom nature has made dear to him, and, on the other, his responsibility for those over whom grace has given him the charge. But over against these trials will be experienced the consolation which comes from the loving sympathy of hearts which he knows are faithful to him and to the Lord's cause. How cheering, amid the conflicts, is the thought that there are some who are ready to stand by him and share his work, even to death; to know that from true hearts prayers are rising to God in his behalf.

The faithful Church will not be unmindful of her pastor's cares; but will extend to him sincere sympathy and unfeigned affection; she will be praying for him, and thus bearing him up against the trials and difficulties of his work; she will commend his virtues, and earnestly pray and labor for his improvement.

The devoted Church will be jealous of her pastor's welfare and happiness; she realizes that her own interest and prosperity are vitally connected with his success. She recognizes the fact that God has established the relation of undershepherd, and that Church and pastor are one, that Christ may be glorified. The wise Church will not stint her pastor in his temporal support; it is to her

interest that his hands be united, and his mind, as far as possible, be relieved of business cares, that he may give himself wholly to the ministry of the Word and to prayer. She will not wish that those dependent on him should lack educational and social advantages, nor think it an unreasonable thing if he is careful to provide for them. Moreover, it is just, since he ministers to her in spiritual things, that she should minister to his wants in temporal things. This is the Scriptural law, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." The prosperity of the cause depends on the mutual love and co-operation of the Church and the pastor. Neither is infallible; neither has absolute authority; neither is independent of the other; both are subject to Christ, and dependent alike on him.

While it is utterly foreign to the spirit of the Gospel for the minister to assume any arbitrary authority over the Church, yet the Scriptures recognize that his official position as overseer, or bishop, gives him influence and real authority as leader. It is his especial duty to study the interests of the Church. His opinion, it would seem, on any matter, ought to be received with deference and consideration. While a Church certainly should not accept the suggestions of her pastor without deliberation, yet she should be slow to oppose any plans suggested by him, since he is supposed to have a better knowledge of what concerns her interest than any one who has not made those things a special study. The chief thing is the maintainance of a truly fraternal spirit between the pastor and all the members. The pastor should consult freely in all matters of importance with the leading brethren of the Church. Their advice will be well worth his heeding.

My reception by the people of Bethany was all that could be desired. I found them to be a warm-hearted and appreciative people, ready to follow the suggestions of their pastor, in whom they showed much confidence. They had been reared under the teachings of Norvel Robertson, and the thoroughness and purity of his instructions were seen in the firmness with which they held to the simple truths of the Gospel. A ladies' mission society, the first in this section, was organized by as noble a band of women as ever met to be about the Lord's business. A Sunday-school was constituted at the church; for, while there had been Sunday-schools in different sections of the community, it seemed desirable that all should unite in a Sunday-school at the church, which was near the center. This would tend to concentration of effort, and surely there was no other part of the community which needed more the evangelizing influences of such meetings. So a Sunday-school was established. It was destined to be glorious, at least in the earnest efforts put forth to build up a strong interest. Many people, young and old, were, for a time, brought together for instruction in the same classes.

Bethany Church now bade fair to be prosperous. There was peace and apparent good-will among the members. Prayer-meetings were held in different neighborhoods, and a good deal of pastoral work was done. Preaching services were held at the church twice a month, efforts were made to secure religious contributions, and to extend the circulation of religious papers. The only ill omen was the bare fact that many, perhaps the majority of the members, did not sympathize with the advance movement of the church. Many habitually absented themselves from the church on the first Sunday,

and some confidently argued that it was better to hold preaching only once a month, since the members desired to visit other churches. On the same principle it would be better for a lady to leave her own home work half done and spend the greater part of the time visiting among her neighbors.

CHAPTER VII.

The Question as to "What Pays" Considered.—The Church's Responsibility to Christ.

A church, in one sense, is a business institution, organized for the purpose of maintaining saving truths and disseminating them through the world. She is dependent for the success on the number and character of her members, and on the zeal and policy with which she strives to spread and enforce the truth. The question may be well raised, "What will pay?" It will be to her interest to adopt such plans as will build her up and make her strong and efficient. Two things must be borne in mind, when we think of the church in this relation. The first is that she is in deadly conflict with the spirit of the world; and she should bring on the fight. She is an aggressive body, an attacking force. The second is that she can not afford to stand still or to stop; the enemy she fights is the devil, and he is strongly fortified in human nature, which is the battle ground. If she stands still her cause falters, for the enemy is never still. He is busily engaged strengthening his strongholds, spying out her weak places, and making apostates in her ranks. She can never relax her vigilance until his power is completely broken, his forces routed and himself subdued. In maintaining herself against this foe and pushing forward her cause in the world, it need scarcely be said that while the weapons of her warfare are not carnal but spiritual, and while she

recognizes her dependence upon divine help, she should use the best skill at command in her relations with the world. He would be considered a novice nowadays who should contend that a church ought not to have a house of worship, and yet a few hundred years ago, some Baptists refused as unscriptural any such thing as a church house. They found no examples to justify it in the New Testament. They met in private houses and in rented halls, for they had the apostles' example for that, but they would take no stock in a church house. At present a church is not considered well established unless she has a house. Only then can she worship God under her own vine and fig tree.

It will pay to keep the church house comfortable and in neat repair. There is no good reason why rotten door steps should remain standing, or the encircling fence be falling down. Carelessness in external appearance indicates carelessness in the internal work of the church. Men will judge the character of a person by his outward appearance, and the same is true of the character of the church. The judgment may not always be just, but often it may. It will be formed any way. If it be said that these things make no difference, that God does not disdain to meet his people in the most humble place, we answer it may not make any difference as to the acceptance of our worship, but it makes a difference even with ourselves and often with other people. While the Holy Spirit in conversion changes the heart, he does not change the taste, nor the business-like way of conducting affairs of importance. It is the purpose of the church to seek out and win the unconverted. While the matter of taste may be carried to an extreme in our wealthy city churches, so that the more humble classes

are repelled by excessive finery, yet this can furnish no argument against soundness, neatness and comfort. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever;" I do not despise style. I notice that every flower has its fashion and every bird its peculiar dress. I suppose man first obtained his ideas of fashion from the works of God. Only fashion should not be permitted to run to extreme, and in church ornamentation must be kept entirely subordinate to the idea of spirituality.

It will pay to make the church house comfortable. It should be made to protect not only from the rain and sun, but also from the cold of winter. Else there will be a large part of the year when any meeting may be interrupted. In country churches where they have only monthly services it is not uncommon for one, two, or even three successive meetings to be disappointed on the account of unfavorable weather. And yet the expenses of the church are running on. I have known a respectable crowd of young people to go to church on a cold day and stay out of doors by a fire while the preacher went in the house and tried to preach to a few who were shivering with cold. Again I have known a good congregation to be dismissed after standing for some time around a log fire, because it was deemed too cold to go into the house to hold services. Would it not pay to make a little further outlay and let the people know that if they come to church on a cold winter's day, they may be comfortable at least after they get there? "A word to the wise is sufficient."

It will pay to have efficient officers. It is well understood to be of prime importance in any other institution to maintain a good corps of officers. No organiza-

tion can do well without men capable and qualified to direct its business. The first church officer is the pastor. The office is of divine appointment and is the most responsible in the world. His words and conduct, public and private, carry a weight for or against religion, that does not belong to the life of any other person. To some he appears a divine guide, and to all, as the most conspicuous example of a professed follower of Christ. From his utterances in the pulpit, from his private life by the force of example, from the general make-up of his character, even his hidden disposition, as well as his known qualities, there flow influences the most wholesome or pernicious. How forcible the injunction for preachers of the gospel. "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." The pastor's influence is felt along every avenue of church life. It exerts itself upon every member of the church and community. How certainly, then, is the well-being of the church suspended upon one to whom all look as the chief exponent of the cause the church lives to sustain. If a church should seem to think it makes little difference who goes in and out before her, let her reflect on what must be his influence. It is a wise remark, which I have heard repeated more than once, that a church never prospers under an inefficient pastor. Every true minister feels the responsibility, and instead of piping criticisms, he needs the warm sympathy of his brethren, their perpetual watch-care and incessant prayers. All his efforts will be failures without their support.

The only other New Testament officer is the deacon. I shall not enter upon any discussion of the duties that pertain to this office. Modern opinion has assigned to

deacons the financial care and responsibility of the church. As far as the Scripture indicates it seems to be their proper work to serve tables ; which does not, however, mean as so many of our deacons have understood it, to pass around bread and wine, but evidently to attend to the temporalities of the church. The pastor then for the spiritual oversight of the whole church, the deacon for the temporal concerns of the body of Christ. To provide for the pastor's support, and for all church expenses, to look after any who may need help or attention, to take care of the funds contributed for church purposes, to have a care for all church property, are some of the duties which naturally pertain to this office ; though each church should specify exactly what she expects her deacons to do. I have known persons elected to this office on no other consideration than that of being blameless or inoffensive. While the New Testament distinctly requires that quality, the very nature of the office is such, and its responsibility, as to demand also business tact and qualities. In this respect we are at fault. One fruitful cause of the neglect of the duties of this office has been uncertainty as to what the deacon was expected to do. The limit of the office is not so clearly defined in the New Testament. Hence, as suggested above, every church should let her deacons know exactly what is expected of them. I shall offer but one further remark on this subject, namely : That while it is customary in some parts of the South for the deacon to hold office for life, in other parts of the country it is the custom for them to be elected every few years. This latter custom, it seems to me, has some advantages, for while it requires certain good qualities to fit one for this office, it is not claimed by any that a divine call is necessary,

and I see no reason why one should be maintained in the office for life, except it be because he makes a good deacon.

It remains to consider the church as a body. We are apt to abuse, to our hurt, the great truth that all blessings come from the Lord. We are disposed to lose sight of the connection between our labors and the fruit we reap. It is true in church life, as a rule, that what we work for that we obtain. The Lord blesses our labor. He does not bless us as instruments in saving others, unless we work for their salvation, not simply from our wishing it, not on account of our observance of certain forms, not by temporary or spasmodic efforts. He bestows His blessings as the result of prayerful efforts along the lines which He has appointed. Only by means of this sort will our churches become strong and fruitful.

Under this head let us remember that it will pay (first) to keep up regular, frequent services. The success of the church depends more on the number and value of her church services, prayer-meetings, Sunday-schools, than anything else. By such means the fire of spiritual life receives new fuel and burns and glows with intenser heat ; its flames increase, reach out, and take hold of the outer world. How can she hope to permanently and constantly increase her membership but by keeping the fire on her altar bright. She may and should send forth a light that will attract those who are groping in darkness, and a heat that will warm into life those who are freezing to death from the coldness of this world's comforts. Religion is not a matter of social pleasure, but of solemn duty to God, and of genuine sympathy for fallen, lost humanity. The pleasures of religion are not the light and fleeting delights of the intercourse of friends, but the high and abiding joys of eternal life.

It will pay (secondly) to organize the members into benevolent societies. Organization facilitates work. It is as essential to any progressive movement, as the proper arrangement of the wheels of a clock are to its running. A church should be like a well disciplined army, every member should have his place in the ranks, know what to do, and be ready to do it whenever called upon. Without organization, a church may maintain an existence, but she can not do much work.

It will pay (thirdly) to make collections frequently—Christian giving should be regarded as a service to God. It should form a part of our regular worship. Christ taught that it is better to give than to receive. When we receive we confer no favor upon other people—we are not benefactors; but when we give we both enlarge our own capacities of benevolence and thus make ourselves better, while we confer benefits upon others. Christ taught us the obligation to give in these words: “Freely you have received, freely give.” God gives to us that we may enjoy, and that we may have somewhat to bestow, and thus may imitate and serve him. Nor need we fear that our resources will be exhausted in giving to the Lord’s cause. For Christ makes this promise, “Give and it shall be given unto you.” The apostle Paul gave the Corinthian brethren this assurance: “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that ye having always all sufficiency, in all things, may abound unto every good work.” You may trace it out in all Scripture teachings, whether by precept or by example, and you will find that the one purpose of Christian life is to do good, and not to receive good; and we do good only by giving—giving work, giving sympathy, giving material aid.

But this benevolent spirit must be cultivated. Strange

to say, there are thousands of church members who seem not to acknowledge any obligation to give of their means to the Lord's cause, and that not because they are niggardly or illiberal. This is evident from their anxiety for you to visit them and stay all night with them, and from their generosity when you do go to see them. They are eager to give you something in the way of hospitality; but many of them would not give a cent to send the Gospel to the perishing men and women of other countries, nor, indeed, to those of our own country; nor for any other benevolent work, outside of home charities. That sort of parsimony towards the Lord's cause is the result of ignorance, prejudice, want of training. People have not been properly instructed as to this duty and blessing. Progress in this duty must be gradual. There must be line upon line and precept upon precept; moreover, precept will not suffice. There must be example, frequent and repeated. Collections are so seldom taken in some churches that the people feel like they are being dunned whenever a collection is proposed. But a collection is not a dun; it is an opportunity to make a benevolent contribution. Collections should be taken so constantly that people will become used to them and get in the habit of giving regularly, for we do nothing well, except it has become a habit with us.

How then does it pay for the church to make regular and frequent collections? It develops the benevolent spirit of the members; and bear in mind that the church is dependent for all her funds, for every purpose, on voluntary contributions. She can not lay a tax and compel payment. That would not be religious service. She must raise it by voluntary contributions, so the more she cultivates, in a regular, systematic way the benevolence

of her people, the more readily she will raise funds for all purposes.

Some good brethren seem to think the opposite of this statement is true, namely: The fewer collections the more money. They do n't bear in mind the familiar truth, that if the cow is not milked regularly she will soon go dry.

I have thus dwelt on the success of the church as a business body, it remains to consider her more responsible relation. Let us look at her in the light of divine appointment. She is the "body of Christ," called also His "bride." She is His help-mate in this world's redemption. She has been redeemed from death. She has been called from darkness into light. She is not her own, she has been bought; and by her avowal of Christ as her Lord, she is committed to His service. She can not make her own ease and comfort the consideration of her life, else she proves unfaithful to her marriage vow, and becomes a false spouse. He sends her forth into the world on a mission of salvation, with the promise of His perpetual presence in spirit, assuring her that He will return in person and take her unto himself. But if some churches have proved unfaithful, let them not think that they will be counted worthy. Their candlestick He will take from them, and, on the last day, they shall be appointed a place among hypocrites and unbelievers.

We might imagine an interview of the Lord with His delinquent churches. He says to them: "Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already unto harvest. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he send forth laborers into his harvest."

The churches answer: "Lord, we are weak. It is all we ourselves can do to live."

The Lord replies: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

The churches respond: We are truly thy followers, Lord, we hold to thy ordinances. We are even ready to die for thee."

To this the Lord replies: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's, shall find it."

The churches answer: "Lord, what is thy will, that we may do it?"

The Lord replies: "Let your loins be girded about and your lamps burning like unto men looking for their Lord, when he shall return from the marriage feast." "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations, and then shall the end come. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even unto the end."

The churches answer; "There is much destitution at home. There are many unbelievers in our own country. Lord, dost thou hold us responsible for the salvation of the heathen?"

The Lord replies: "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" "no man cometh unto the Father but by me." "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." "The field is the world," "Ye are the light of the world;" "ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted. It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of man."

The churches answer: "Lord, thy servants are poor in this world's goods, we are hard pressed. Hast thou fully considered our poverty?"

The Lord replies: "The foxes have holes and the birds of heaven have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." "Lay not up yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where thy treasure is there will thy heart be also." "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon." "Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?" "Behold the birds of the heaven, they sow not neither do they reap or gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow, they toil not neither do they spin, yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." "Seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me to render to each man according to his works. I am the alpha and the omega,

the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are they that wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. Without are the dogs and the sorcerers and the fornicators and the murderers and the idolators, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie. Amen."

CHAPTER VIII.

Protracted Meetings.—Suggestions as to their Desirability and their Abuse.

The summer draws on. Sol shoots his burning rays down on the head of the toiler, and drives him at noon with all the herds of the pasture into the shade to rest from midday exhaustion. The hot lazy summer, with its long dreamy days! Oh, the angry heat! The ground is parching! The glossy corn writhes and twists, and the modest cotton wilts and droops. The garden, with its rows of cabbage heads; its running beans; its long cucumber vines; its lively peas and its homely tomatoes, pines away. The farmer sighs for rain, and lies down to take a noon nap; but the house-fly faithfully reminds him that noon is not the time to sleep. There is not much more work to be done, the crops are about laid by, fodder pulling time is close at hand, and it is the season of fruits. The juicy peach hangs on the bending limb; mellow apples cover the ground under the parent tree; the delicious melon is brought in from the patch, cooled and sliced upon the wash bench at the end of the gallery, a feast too superb in all its freshness for princes.

This is the time for protracted meetings, which are looked forward to as times of social greeting as well as revival seasons of religion; for friends come from a distance, and in these gatherings relatives meet. It is not uncommon for people to attend from a distance of

twenty miles and more. Protracted meetings unavoidably interfere with the regular church meetings, Sunday-schools, etc. It is customary for the church or pastor to invite one or more preachers to assist in the services. Some churches feel that they have slighted some one if every preacher in the whole country is not invited. I have frequently heard of meetings where seven or eight preachers were present. As waves, set in motion in different directions, weaken and destroy one another, so, many different leaders will commonly interfere. But whether the pastor has any help or not there is usually a big crowd. Everybody turns out, on Sunday at least. Even the delinquent members, who have diligently stayed at home ever since the last annual meeting, are on hand.

The order of exercises is prayer-meeting at ten or half-past, conducted by the preacher or some lay member, several brethren in turn lead in prayer, some short talks, interspersed with spiritual songs, a brief interim, and at half-past eleven or twelve preaching begins. The sermon commonly consumes about an hour, though I have, on such occasions, sat under the sound of the gospel for two and a quarter hours, in which time the preacher preached himself down and everybody else, and left the house as cold as an ice-palace. During an hour's intermission dinner is served. It partakes of the character of a feast, and exhibits the profuse hospitality of the country. After dinner a half-hour is spent in conversation. The men group under the shade trees for chat; mothers are nursing their children; a party gather in the house and make it resound with choice pieces of music; the young men hang around in crowds, but some, more fortunate than their fellows, with fair com-

panions, occupy the buggies, greatly to the annoyance of many good people. It is the common talk that, if there are any candidates for office, they make it a point to attend these meetings, and sometimes, which is unanimously condemned as bad taste, evince more interest in the canvass than in the success of the meeting. After



R. R. TURNAGE.

recess, another sermon, the usual closing exercises of exhortations, offers of prayer, reception of members and the meeting adjourns until the morrow.

I had been invited to attend on the third Sunday in July (1882), the church at Hepzibah, some fourteen miles south of Bethany, on the same creek. I reached the ground on Monday morning following. I found the the pastor, Rev. R. R. Turnage, with a crowd of

people waiting impatiently. This was my first acquaintance with the pastor. He was a large fine looking old gentleman, in appearance about fifty years of age. He had the bearing of a man of God. I had heard him spoken of in high terms, and I found him to be of blameless life, a supporter of every good work, and always ready to forward the cause of Christ. Without the advantages of a collegiate education, he had improved his opportunities by private study, and was devoting his powers to the Lord's cause. The meeting continued but two days longer, quite to the disappointment of the visiting pastor. The brethren declared the fodder was burning up, and notwithstanding a good interest, we closed; but as I rode homeward I thought to myself that I would not again, if I could know it before it before hand, attend a meeting which should continue no longer. The fourth Sunday in July I was attending the Baptist State Convention at Sardis. The first Sunday in August I was again with Bro. Turnage at Ebenezer church in South Covington. Here I spent several days quite pleasantly, and, by request of the pastor, at the close of the meeting baptized two who had just declared for Christ. The week following I assisted Bro. Bush at Silver Creek. At the close of this meeting six were buried with Christ in baptism.

The next week embracing the third Sunday was the time for my meeting at Bethany. It was a very precious one. Twenty put on Christ, and the church was much refreshed. In this meeting Bro. Bush was my helper, and the next week I accompanied him to Leaf River church, some forty miles east of Bethany. Bro. Timothy Rodgers was the efficient deacon, known and respected alike for his safe judgment in business matters

and for his generosity and piety. A brother of Elder Norvel Robertson, with his family, lived in the community. Elder Robertson had, at one time, lived here, and for some years had been pastor of the church. His eldest daughter, who was married to Mr. Caleb Welsh, lived not far from the church, and was a member of it. Her son, Bro. J. N. Welsh, also a deacon, gave promise of becoming a most useful citizen as well as an efficient servant of Christ.

The church was strongly related in its history and membership with Bethany. Several cases of sickness prevented a large attendance on the meeting and so good an interest on the part of the church as we hoped for; yet the unconverted were interested, and at the close of the meeting half a dozen of converts were baptized.

The next Sunday being the first in September, I filled my regular appointment at Bethany, and returned in the afternoon towards Leaf River to Salem church, near Williamsburg. I stopped Sunday night with Bro. J. T. Duckworth, the church's clerk and a leading man of the community. Monday morning I went with the family to Salem, where I found a company of appreciative people. Bro. M. N. Manning was the pastor. He preached in the forenoon what I called an excellent sermon, and in the afternoon the writer preached. This was my last day at Salem for some time. Already, while at church, I felt unmistakable symptoms of malarial fever. As the immediate result of the meeting a half-dozen were added to the church, among whom were two daughters of Bro. Duckworth. At his house I spent the week combating the fever, and Mrs. Duckworth was my physician. I have never received better

attention; and I may remark here that I have never anywhere found a more hospitable family. Never shall I forget nor fail to appreciate the attention and many tokens of respect which were so profusely given me at that period, and in after years when I was their pastor. So soon as I was sufficiently recovered to travel, I was gladly surprised one evening by the appearance of W. L. Mikell, an esteemed brother from Bethany. He came with a buggy. This act made me sensible of a care, on the part of my people, of which I had not before been aware. The Pearl River Association, of which my church was a member, had convened during my sickness, and I was thus denied the pleasure of attending.

On the third Sunday I preached at Bethany, and in the afternoon started back to Williamsburg. Bro. Bush and I had proposed, when an opportunity should be offered, to hold a week's meeting at this place. Sunday night the Methodist circuit rider preached. On Monday at 11 A. M., I opened the week's meeting. Tuesday I was joined by Bro. Bush, direct from the Strong River Association. The meeting continued nearly all the week. There was no active Baptist church at Williamsburg. Once there had been a strong church, but it had divided, and parts of it had formed two country churches, Salem and Liberty. A form of a church had continued at Williamsburg, but I learned that it had not met for fifteen months or more. We had a most refreshing meeting, one of the best I was ever engaged in. The whole town confessedly felt the impulse. The community was deeply moved. Four persons professed faith in Christ. They were received into the fellowship of the church at Salem.

We felt that the meeting was a great success. We had much for which to thank God. This was the last of my protracted meetings for that season. I take this occasion to offer some remarks on the benefits and the abuse of such meetings. It has been a question in the minds of some conscientious people as to whether protracted meetings are beneficial. I accord with the common opinion which recognizes their necessity. Some evils, however, appear to be connected with them. One is that it has become customary in the country to wait until the protracted meeting comes round to join the church; even the holder of a letter commonly waits for the protracted meeting. The explanation is to be found, it seems to me, in the church's inactivity the whole year round. The lack of effort on her part to maintain an interest and to keep up the work of soul saving. The truth is the protracted meeting in many churches is the only time when there is any great effort made to convert sinners, and is it a wonder that outsiders do not feel the influence of the church sufficiently to enlist them until this special effort is made? May I not suggest that this objection will hardly be overcome until there is more constant effort for saving souls.

Another objection is that the interest is often superficial and leaves the church in a colder condition than before. This, is perhaps to be traced to the same cause. The protracted meeting is depended on largely, if not exclusively for revival interest. When the meeting begins the church is cold. No special interest may be felt, but a revival is the end to be secured by all means. If an interest is not awakened in the congregation the meeting is a failure. Too often questionable means are resorted to in order to awaken the desired interest; and

when it comes it is of the superficial kind ; it is not deep and abiding. When Christian people attend the faithful preaching of the word, and engage in sincere worship and earnest effort for the lost, then lasting good will be done ; but too often they attend to sensational appeals with a wrong purpose in view, namely the purpose of getting members into the church. The result may be a great awakening, but an awakening of animal excitement.

The objection also, is urged that many people who are not converted are gathered into the church ; it must be admitted that even in genuine revivals some will join the church who should not. Some will join because it is popular, or customary. Others will seek some wordly advantage in the church. Others again will have some mistaken notion of Christianity, and thus under a false impression will join ; and so, in all ingatherings, it may be expected some will be brought in who ought to be left out. This evil is frequently increased by the mistaken view with which such meetings are often conducted. Too much stress is laid on joining the church. Not uncommonly indeed this is regarded as the main purpose. The number who join is made the standard of success. Let some one mention a protracted meeting. The first question is, "Did you have a good meeting?" The second, "How many joined ;" or, "how many did you get?" This evil may be largely corrected by considering what must be the purpose of all revival meetings, and by constant efforts all the year round for conversions.

Having said this much in reference to objections to protracted meetings, I beg leave to submit some sugges-

tions as to what must be their proper design, and as to the manner of conducting them.

First, then, as it may be expected that there will always be revival seasons, it is certainly wise to improve them by special services, and it is but conforming to a law of business, which is, also, in accordance with nature, to set apart times to be devoted to revival efforts. But it should not be the design of such meetings merely to swell the membership of the church.

I do not mean to disparage joining the church, nor to discourage reasonable effort to induce those who are converted to follow Christ publicly. But I wish to give emphasis to a truth which ought to be clear enough to all who believe in a regenerated church membership; the end aimed at in a revival meeting should not be to get joiners, and the blessings of such a meeting are not to be measured by the number who join. The blessings to be sought are higher and broader, of which additions to the church would be the natural result.

The real design then of all revivals should be a nearer approach to God by all who name his name, a fuller consciousness of the divine presence in the person of the Holy Spirit, pardoning, refreshing, comforting, and strengthening, for the duties devolving upon every follower of Christ, and finally, special prayers and labors every way for the salvation of the lost. Such a revival will not be an occasion for regret, nor will it be charged with any great evil results. The aim, then, in a revival should be to seek God in all the fullness of his Grace. The preaching should be the simple, earnest, loving Gospel delivered as a message from God, and all the services should be held in his fear.

In reference to the custom of two services a day with

dinner on the ground, I suggest that it might be better in its final effect to have but one preaching service a day where night meeting can not be held. The custom of two services, which is now in vogue, has some objectionable features of which I will mention the following: It makes the meetings quite expensive; it imposes a great amount of trouble and labor on the female portion of the membership, and causes the meetings to partake too much of the nature of a social feast. It makes the people commonly impatient to get through with the series. It encourages hasty and imperfect work; it injures by overwork, a great many good preachers; it frequently, on account of the expense and worry, causes the meeting to close when the spiritual condition of the community demands that it should go on longer. For these reasons I opine, it would be better in the long run, and more in accord with the demands of the age to make the work less crowded, and continue the meetings longer, so as to have a good prayer-meeting in the morning with exhortations, in which free speaking by the brethren shall be encouraged. Then a preaching service may follow, and after that dismissal for the day, unless night meetings can be held. In this way it could be better afforded to continue the series of meetings for a longer period.

There are however some advantages in the present custom. It, perhaps, conduces to greater crowds, as some are attracted by the social feature and some by the free and rare lunch. It also conduces to enthusiasm. Yet I am inclined to think that these considerations are more than counterbalanced by the haste and the superficiality of the work.

CHAPTER IX.

“Coming Events Cast their Shadows Before.”

When the meeting at Williamsburg began, I had but partially recovered from the fever of two weeks before, but I was conscious of other cares. There came to me across the country, ever and anon, thoughts of home and mother. It had been nearly three months since I had seen the family. My brother, who had continued at home till the commencement of Mississippi College in June, was now engaged in teaching, some thirty miles from Clinton. I had made arrangements with a widow lady, an old acquaintance of my mother, to stay with them for company ; yet I knew whatever other cares they may have had they must be sad and lonesome, and these thoughts filled me with sadness. Wednesday evening, I went a few miles into the country to spend the night with a friend, Mr. J. B. Rogers. These words were continually in mind:

“Oh, how praying rests the weary,
Prayer can change the night, to day ;
Then, when life seems dark and dreary,
Do n't forget to pray.”

It was only in casting my thoughts upward to the fountain of all comfort that I could obtain momentary relief.

I was awakened about midnight by a herald announcing the death of my brother. I made haste to

Williamsburg, where I learned from the messenger from Rakin, that it was my youngest brother, seven years old. I thought it hardly prudent to start immediately to Clinton, as I was compelled to make the journey by horseback and under a burning sun. As the meeting was just under headway, I concluded to wait until its close. It was the next Wednesday morning when I reached Clinton. My little brother, who died very suddenly, had been buried some days. The next oldest was now speechless with typhoid fever. In a few days, however, the crisis was passed, and it was to be hoped that the worst was over, but no sooner had he begun to recover than my brother next to myself, and my only sister that was living with us, were stricken down by the plague. Two weeks passed away and the young man, exhausted by fever, could no longer bear up against the ceaseless drain of strength, and yielded to the inevitable. Oh, death, how horrible thou art! Thou seemest never so terrible till thou touchest one nearest our life.

The taking of my brother was getting near to myself. He had been my companion, my partner, my fellow. We had been reared together, had worked together; in everything we had been united, and yet, as the younger, he had been under my influence. "Brother at once and son." I felt much pride in him, and gladly made my sacrifice to give him advantages. He was more popular than myself; had more friends, for he was of a very social and genial disposition. I looked forward to the time when he would take position in society as a useful and honored member of it. I was not at all prepared for his death, for I did not believe it was coming. I was confident that the Lord was on my side. I believed

that he was committed to my success, that he was jealous of my interest. Hence I was disposed to wink at adversity and any seeming opposition. I had no idea of death, and when the shock came it well-nigh unnerved me. My faith seemed to be shaken. It must be that what I supposed was faith in the providence of God was only presumption. The most biting thought was that, perhaps, these calamities came on my account. They seemed as judgments sent from the Almighty. True, I was not conscious of any wrong purpose or ambition. Yet it seemed now that my aspirations must be contrary to the Divine will, and I felt that others who were innocent, were suffering for my sins. These darts struck me with full and awful force. But the end was not yet. My sister slowly recovered.

The remains of my brother were borne away, and never shall I forget the roar of the iron horse as he rushed passed the homestead with the corpse, bearing it to the place of burial. He seemed to me to be the impersonation of death. In a few days it was evident that my mother, who had borne up so long, was infected with the disease. It was not thought best for her to remain at Clinton, so we sent her to her brother's at Brandon, while I remained with the convalescent sister. In two weeks she was able to travel, and I conveyed her also to Brandon. Mother lingered through twenty-six days, and the spirit, weary of this world, took its flight to the regions beyond in pursuit of many loved ones. It was a soul, as we believed, ripe for heaven, for whose departure I could not mourn, except her absence. Yet, if the sweetest word in human language be "mother," the saddest reflection is "mother is dead." The body was laid away in the family burying ground at Steen's

Creek Cemetery. The tragedy was ended. What a change I had experienced in six weeks of time! Two months before lived the family of my affections and my hopes, bereft already of a husband and father; yet all the more for this bereavement it was my pleasure to serve them. But now my hopes were blighted, my plans thwarted, my family smitten with death. The ruin was irreparable. The design of Providence in this issue of events I may not know. It was to me then a sealed mystery, and so I presume it will remain until the light of eternity shall make it known.

Death is not always the king of terrors. While he brings the end of this life, He introduces to another an unending life. When we consider the temptations, trials, failure, the sins, the pains and the toils to which mortals here are subject, we can not count as unfortunate those who die sooner than we, especially since we know that it is only a question of a few years with all. Mr. Ingersoll, in a funeral oration pronounced over his brother's grave, gave expression to this striking but comfortless sentence: "Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word, but in the night of death hope sees a star, and listening, love can hear the rustle of a wing." But I have a better hope. All nature teaches me a resurrection, and I give full credence to him who said: "Thy brother shall rise again." "I am the resurrection and the life." To me that is a most suggestive and agreeable phrase, so often repeated in the Old Testament, "gathered to his fathers." The future world is not a dreary vision,

but a near reality. When this life is over I shall go in quest of kindred spirits; and somewhere in the vast domain of the Divine Father I shall hold sweet converse with father, mother, brother, sister. "But do you believe in eternal punishment?" Yes, surely, the law of cause and effect, which is a law of God and prevails, so far as we know, universally, requires that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. One truth in which the language of Scripture is plain, is, that in the future world the wicked and the righteous alike shall reap the result of their life here, and that their state shall be permanent. There are two considerations which to my mind ameliorate the thoughts of eternal punishment. The first is that each lost one will suffer the penalty of his own sins; for "the sting of death is sin." The second is, that the punishment is of God, who is infinite in love as well as inflexible in justice and glorious in holiness. I can confide in the Judge of all the universe to do right. The situation of the finally impenitent will be suited to their character, and they shall acquiesce in their condemnation.

I can easily commit to the hands of the Great Judge my infant brother. The older was a member of a Baptist Church, of which for some years he had acted as clerk. He was lively and much disposed to fun. He was not unaccustomed to lead in religious exercises, and I cherish the hope that he was a true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ. I can entertain no doubt that my mother was prepared for the dying hour. I recall one incident which it may not be out of place to record here. When quite a small boy, I lay one evening on her lap as she sat on the horse block in front of the gate, and she was telling me the story of Jesus of Nazareth—

about his mother, who he was, what he did, his miracles, his teachings, and how his enemies put him to death. I did not comprehend the signification of these things, but the outline of the story remained and was recalled in after time. Many years afterwards, when I had entered the ministry, I was one day riding with her in a buggy, and conversing along the road, it came in the way to speak of my views of the plan of redemption, which I had been studying, and when I had finished she said, "Shuck, you have explained these things to me better than I ever had them explained before." It is a pleasing recollection that I may have given some satisfaction to one who first, so far as I remember, told me personally the story of the cross.

In the absence of other knowledge, I shall hope that the darkest experience of my life in the future world may be seen to have been not a curse to any one, but a blessing. With this hope I join the refrain of the apostle Paul. "Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory?"

"Vital spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, oh, quit, this mortal frame;
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying;
Oh, the pain, the bliss of dying;
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And languish into life.

"Hark! they whisper, angels say,
Sister spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight;
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

"The world recedes; it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears!

With sounds seraphic ring.
Lend, lend your wings! I mount, I fly!
Oh, grave, where is thy victory?
Oh, death, where is thy sting?"

I turned my face again towards Clinton and the deserted home. No signs of life remained save some domestic fowls, which hunted their food around the dwelling, missing the hand that fed them, but unaware of the fate which had come upon the late inmates of that house. Oh, wretched fowls! Why linger ye around this forsaken place? It was your home, but has not that which made it home gone forth to come no more? And the hand of the robber will he pass you by? But ah! happy fowls, you know no care. You endure no trouble. You think of no past, no future, and of no responsibility. Therefore I leave you alone to your destiny. It was Thursday, about noon, when I discovered that fever was coming on me, so I returned to Brandon by the evening train. I had been invited by a cousin, Amanda, and her father, Henry Atkins, in case I should take the fever, to make their house my home. They lived about six miles from Brandon in the country. The invitation was timely and was gratefully accepted. Dr. P. H. Fairly was my physician. The disease proved to be not typhoid fever, but what is popularly called swamp fever. In one week it began to abate, and in two weeks more I was able to ride abroad. During this illness nothing could exceed the attention of my loving kinsfolk. Their kindness will be ever fresh in my memory.

I mounted my horse and was shortly on the road to Lawrence, going by where the remnant of the family, Jennie and Custus, were staying with their sister, Mrs.

Harper. Wednesday I reached the community of Bethany. The brethren were surprised at seeing me, for a rumor of my death had gone in advance. One day was spent in visiting, and then I proceeded to Bunker Hill. Just at dark Saturday I stepped on the gallery of Bro. S. E. Bass, who lived in half a mile of the schoolhouse. The family were at supper and I could hear the conversation. As I stood for a moment I heard Bro. Bass ask, "Do you reckon it is true about his being dead?" and the answer came, "Yes, Uncle Joe said he heard read a postal card from a man who had seen him buried." This was the voice of the man who had taught school at Bunker Hill in the spring. A rap on the floor brought to the door the friendly face of Mrs. Bass. She was much surprised at seeing the dead man standing before her a living reality. I was soon seated at the table enjoying the hospitality of this country home.

The next morning I met the brethren of the church, which had been constituted a month before in my absence, Elders R. R. Turnage and H. Grayham composing the presbytery. The church having heard of my death, first by rumor and then by what seemed to be direct news, had called Bro. Turnage for their pastor the day before. He had not, however, been informed of the call; and now what was to be done? The movement to establish a church there had begun, progressed and culminated under my ministry. Though I had not urged the constitution of a church, yet the church had been constituted, and the membership had, all the while, expected me to be their pastor. Added to this was my own anxiety to preach in the community, for I felt that in this section there had been a door opened to me of the Lord. The brethren were unanimous in favoring a

re-consideration of the call made the day before and I did not prevent them. So I became pastor of the young church. I now hastened back to Clinton to make a final disposition of my effects that remained there. Then I returned to Lawrence to arrange my next year's work. In my absence Bethany had given me a unanimous call. The churches of Salem and Leaf River, also, had invited me to become their pastor, the latter on the recommendation of Bro. Bush, who had resigned. In a short time, however, he and I had an interview, and he decided to retain the church. This made Bethany, Bunker hill, and Salem my field for the next year. They formed a triangle, whose base was about twenty miles, and either of whose sides was about twenty-five miles. To this trio of churches belongs the credit of supporting whatever work I achieved in South Mississippi.

CHAPTER X.

Mt. Carmel, Salem, Williamsburg, Columbia, Poplar Springs.

In order that I might be near the center of my field I removed to Mt. Carmel, leaving the home of Sister Robertson, where piety, culture, and simplicity combined to make it a spot sacred to my memory. I engaged board with Mr. Pope, the Justice of the Peace. He and his family were members of the Methodist Church. He kept the only boarding-house in the place. Mr. S. H. Hampton and his brother, who were teaching school in the town, boarded here, and lodged in the same room with me.

Mt. Carmel was a village of considerable wealth for this country. Eight or ten families lived here. For several years a good school had been maintained. There was a Methodist Church one mile south and a Presbyterian Church three miles east. The nearest Baptist Church was five miles off. The town was divided in sentiment among these denominations, but there was little exemplary piety. No regular services were kept up; the Sunday-school, which had flourished under Rev. Mr. Story, had gone entirely down. The town had almost no social habits, yet its citizens were high-toned and respected, and the morals of the town were evidently improving, for, in the past years, under the reign of King Alcohol, it had been lawless, and the center of influence for evil. ²I preached in town once in a while to a respectable, but apparently disinterested audience. We got up

a debating society, which proved to be one of the most interesting features of my life here.

In my call to Bethany there had been no conditions specified by the church. Perhaps there was no thought of two Sundays a month. I met the church in January. On my statement that I could not assume the responsibility of the church, unless I could give them one-half of my time, and that, under the circumstances, I thought they might pay me five hundred dollars, they agreed to try to do this. The matter of raising the salary, however, was postponed for the present. In the meantime a difficulty sprang up in the church. Two of the members had become involved in a law suit, in which each party claimed that the other had made false representations under oath. The pastor was charged with taking sides, and blamed because he insisted that neither party had necessarily made a false statement; that under oath one should not assert with absolute certainty, thus, as it seems, claiming infallibility, but should affirm according to his understanding, his judgment, or the best of his knowledge. The trouble was a serious one, almost the whole church taking sides, and it had the destructive effects common to such difficulties. I should be in favor of granting a large and life-long pension to the pastor who shall invent a successful method of handling such difficulties. Nowhere than here is the rule more true that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. When an effort was made to raise a subscription for the pastor's salary, only about three hundred dollars could be obtained. I took this as an indication of the church's sentiment toward me, and talked of resigning. But the brethren contended that the best of feeling existed on the part of the church, and attributed the short subscrip-

tion to their poverty. The truth is that the majority of of the members did not appreciate two Sunday services, believing that the church would do just as well and even better with only one Sunday as formerly. I give it here as my opinion, since formed by experience and observation, it is best not to bring the matter of the pastor's salary publicly before the church, if it can be avoided, for it will make the impression on a great many people that the preacher's consideration is money, and it will have a tendency to defeat the very purpose of his work. It is best to arrange the matter privately through the deacons or a committee.

My policy was to make no private canvass of the matter, but to have it considered by the church as a whole. I am quite sure it is best to have meetings of all the officers of the church in which church matters of importance should be discussed before they are brought before the body.

In January also I made my first pastoral visit to Salem. I made a circuit around the church, visiting nearly all the families, so as to make their acquaintance before accepting the call. This church is located four miles east of Williamsburg, near a large creek called Oakatoma. The membership numbered about one hundred. They were not wealthy, but were mostly independent farmers.

The people were of an exceptionally good class. One family predominated in the community, and I have heard the church spoken of as the Rogers' Church. In all my acquaintances I do not know of a more honorable family of people. Education was neglected, so that there was little literary culture, and a rather restrained liberality, but there was plenty of common sense, pure morality, genuine piety, and a high sense of honor characterized their business life. Such disgraces as profanity,

revellings, profligacy and debauchery were almost unknown in the community, and were not at all tolerated. This high tone of morality was the result of generations of careful parental training, under the influence of true religious faith and practice.

In this immediate neighborhood, as well as that of Bunker Hill there were no colored people. The community was almost entirely Baptist. The church was undeveloped in respect to its working force, but was up to the general average. They had been satisfied with preaching once a month. The preacher sometimes coming from a distance of thirty or forty miles. There was not a permanent Sunday-school, nor any systematic plan of benevolence. A protracted meeting once a year was the custom.

My pastorate at Salem was not destined to be marked by any sudden attempt at reformation. A ladies' missionary society was organized, which did not flourish, and yet failed not to develop more interest in missions among both men and women. Regular, systematic contributions were encouraged. The Sunday-school was fostered, and gradually became better; and a steady, healthy growth marked the membership.

On my way from Mt. Carmel to Salem I must needs pass through Williamsburg, the county seat of Covington. This was a dry little town of one hundred and fifty inhabitants. It was situated in the midst of the pine hills. The first time I visited Williamsburg was on the occasion of a Sunday-school Convention, in June or July of the previous year. It was understood that a Presbyterian, a Methodist and a Baptist minister were to make speeches. I reached the place about twelve o'clock, after riding through a rain for several miles. I

was soon marched out to the stand to speak. Mine was the only effort. After a barbecue dinner I walked out over the grounds on which stood the school-house, and a feeling came over me that I should try to exert some influence in the surrounding country.

My first preaching here was in connection with Elder Bush, the previous autumn, which has already been related. And now, as the town lay on my way to Salem, I determined to hold regular services on Sunday afternoon as I returned home.

There was a small Catholic Church building in the place, and one Catholic family. The Methodists had an organization. The Presbyterians had some influential members, but no organized church.

The Baptist Church was practically dead. There was no house of worship except the Catholic house. The Baptist had formerly worshiped in the first story of a house built for the double purpose of a Masonic lodge and a Baptist Church. But it had been converted into a school-house, and the Baptists, through the destruction of the county records in the burning of the court-house, had lost their legal claim to it.

Pretty soon reorganization was talked of. The members of the old church met and dissolved. On the same day a new church was constituted of such of the old members as would go into it, and some new ones. Bro., now Elder, J. L. Finly, had just moved here from Fannin. He added strength to the new organization. It was thought necessary for me to serve as pastor until permanent arrangements could be made.

The church at Bethany moved along smoothly. The meetings were enjoyable to me at least, and progress was made in every department of church work. The Sun-

day-school was placed under the care of Bro. I. H. Mikel. It would be hard to say too much as to the zeal and faithfulness of this dear brother, who has since passed to his reward. May a double portion of his spirit have fallen upon some young man of his community. Bunker Hill having been organized on the principle of work for Christ, shrank not from duty. Converts were added monthly, and the church grew rapidly in spiritual power. Arrangements were commenced to build a house of worship which should be completed by the protracted meeting in August.

Ever since my coming into the county I had felt an interest in a little town ten miles south of Bunker Hill, Columbia, by name, the county seat of Marion. It was a beautiful place of two or three hundred inhabitants, situated on the east bank of Pearl River. It was the business center of the section. The town is thirty miles from the railroad, but is regularly visited by steamboats in the winter and spring seasons. It boasted of a fine school, under the management of Professor Summers; the best school anywhere in the country.

Columbia is one of the oldest towns in the State. But up to this time (1883) it had never contained a church house. The Methodists had an organization, maintained regular services, and were now making preparations to build. There had been a small Baptist Church constituted there by a Bro. Gough, as I was informed, but it was short-lived. While I found a good many Baptists there, they were totally disorganized, and were not dreaming of a Baptist Church. The most of them held membership in churches at a distance, but some maintained no present connection with any church. The town had been long so largely under Methodist in-

fluence that the Baptists were nearly one-half Wesleyans. As might have been expected they were exceedingly timid about undertaking anything looking towards the building up of the Baptist cause. Such a disposition was the natural result of their position. They had long helped to support the Methodist circuit rider, and lent half a mind to the recognition of Methodism. Yet there were some genuine Baptists in Columbia, though they had become as a bottle in the smoke. As is usual the out-of-town people thought that nothing could be made out of Columbia, as if the Gospel were not intended for sinners, and as if the kingdom of Christ were not to be established on the ruins of Satan's power. The Lord had a work to be done in Columbia; yea, a work that must be done, ^{to}over all opposition. I held monthly meetings here on Saturday or Sunday night, after preaching at Bunker Hill. In a few months we made an effort to organize. One Monday morning we met in the courthouse, and the following names were enrolled as members of the new church: Dr. M. L. Banks and wife, J. W. Holleman, W. R. Mobly and wife, W. B. Fortenbury, Mrs. E. Fern. Mrs. Fern has since passed over the river. In a few weeks the number was doubled. Among the number of recruits was the family of a deceased Baptist minister, Elder Dale, who had been killed in a cyclone at Monticello, in the spring of the previous year. The family had since moved to Columbia. This was a small beginning, but it was a tree of the Lord's planting, and it has since grown and flourished, though they are still worshiping in a borrowed house. Columbia had been a notoriously wicked place. It furnished a fair example of what a public spirited and somewhat cultivated place may be without the controlling influence

of genuine piety. There were, it is true, many pious people among the inhabitants. Many generous, excellent people existed among the Methodists; but in point of real Christian power and influence, the Methodists possessed little advantage over their Baptist brethren. There were two or three saloons in the town, and drinking and fighting was the fashion, especially on public days. Balls given in the court-house were common and popular. Nearly all the young people took part in them with zest, church members along with the balance. But a better day was dawning for Columbia. The Methodists were building an elegant house, and the Baptists were slowly but surely establishing themselves, and sowing seed which should germinate and ripen into harvest. The following letter received about this time explains itself:

OXFORD, MISS.

REV. T. S. POWELL, WHITESAND, MISS.

Dear Bro.:—By this you will be reassured that I have not forgotten you. I am now attending the University at Oxford, studying English under Professor Johnson. I am highly pleased. I regret to hear of your sad bereavements. Surely the Lord is dealing very sorely with you; yet He knows best. How are you pleased with your field? What does it pay? Do you ever think of going to the Seminary? I think of preaching a year before I go. I need rest. I may go right on; however, I think I would like a country pastorate. Should you wish to go to the Seminary I might take your field, if agreeable arrangements could be made. There are plenty of fields, but I would prefer a country pastorate. Bro. Anding is preparing to go to the Seminary. He means to go to Louisville in February. I wish you every success. Please write me at Oxford. I am,

Fraternally,

J. G. CHASTAIN.

Bro. Chastain had graduated from Mississippi College the year before. I had been pleasantly associated

with him during my whole college course, and was glad to welcome him to the prospects of this field. The enlargement of the work opened the way for another man. He was appointed to the Mission Work during the summer months, and sustained, partly by the State Mission Board, and partly by the Home Mission Board. A good part of his salary, however, was collected on the field.



J. G. CHASTAIN.

I had expected to meet him at the Commencement of Mississippi College, but he failed to get there in time, and I hastened back to begin a meeting at Poplar Springs, three miles south of Mt. Carmel. I had been preaching there in a school-house on Saturday before the first Sunday for more than a year. Other pastors had also held services here. It was a thickly settled community. There were in the community many wid-

owed ladies whose sons were beginning to take position in society and in business. The community was largely Baptist, though it lay under the shadow of Mt. Zion Methodist Church. The Baptist element had, of late years, been gaining. Those who were members of Baptist Churches belonged to Bethany, eight miles distant, or to Little Whitesand, nearly as far away. We had desired to hold a series of meetings here the year before, but it was objected to on the ground that it would interfere with the literary school. It was now an arm of Bethany, and was soon to develop into a zealous, Baptist Church. The community was eager for a revival effort. I was joined in a day or two by Bro. Chastain. This was his introduction to the country. Quite an interest was awakened. Christians were revived, strengthened and united. At the close of the meeting, in a little creek near by, ten hopeful converts were buried with Christ, in the likeness of His death, and rose again in the likeness of His resurrection, to walk in the newness of life.

This was the beginning of protracted meetings for the season. Bro. Chastain assisted me at Williamsburg, Salem and Bunker Hill. At the latter place, especially, the meeting was blessed with immediate results. At Bethany I had to my assistance also Elder A. V. Rowe, the esteemed pastor of Clinton Church. He greatly endeared himself to our people by his Christ-like deportment and his eloquent, masterly sermons. The Holy Spirit was with us in much power, and, as usual, we had a most excellent revival. I say as usual, for we never had any other kind of protracted meeting at Bethany. Bro. Rowe will long be remembered with pleasure by our people.

.. In the fall I was constrained to hold a meeting at Co-

lumbia. I had no help in the ministry. Yet some of the sweetest meetings I ever held was when I felt I was alone with God. Then it has seemed to me that the consciousness of divine presence remained more constantly and more clearly upon me. I held meetings for nearly a week, having prayer-meetings in the morning, in which our Methodist brethren freely took part, and preaching at night. It was one of the times when the Spirit of God moves mightily upon the people, and chains them with interest. It was a delightful season, leaving its impress on the town as it did also on the soul of the preacher. The close of the meeting was one of the most impressive baptismal scenes with which I have been connected. A quarter of a mile above the town, on a curve of the river, where the extended sandy banks are shaded by bending willows, which conceal the view from the town, I led two trembling female converts far out into Pearl River, which at that season was shallow, and, at this point, is very beautiful; and in sight of almost the whole town performed the rite which made them declared followers of Christ. This was about the first baptism administered there, at least for many years. As the scene closed a lady of another persuasion was heard to remark, "Yes, and I believe that is the right way, too."

The meeting of Pearl River Association drew nigh. It convened at Antioch Church, to the South of Columbia. Rev. R. R. Turnage was the respected moderator and W. J. Armstrong the efficient clerk. Among the proceedings of the Association a resolution, in substance, as follows, may be found:

Resolved, That the State Board be requested to appoint a missionary to labor next year within the bounds of this Association.

The appointment was given to Bro. Chastain. The Williamsburg and Columbia Churches were turned over to him, and the time had arrived for me to make arrangements for next the year.

CHAPTER XI.

The Custom of Making Annual Calls.—School at Williamsburg.—
The Pastor as a School Teacher.

We have reached the autumn of 1883. It is easy to look back over the years that have flown, but who can forecast the future? Autumn is the season of greatest anxiety to country pastors and churches. The present year's work about done, the pastor inquires, "Where shall be my field next year?" The church, "Who shall be our pastor?" What causes this anxiety? The churches have a custom from whose fetters they can scarcely free themselves, of calling their ministerial supply annually. This makes the life of the preacher precarious. It causes restlessness among ministers. Its occasions changes which would not have otherwise occurred, and oftentimes leaves churches looking in vain for a shepherd. Oh, the agony of the next meeting, when the church is to make her call! What wrestling will seize the breast of the pastor? What commotion will stir the church? It is not a question of life and death; but it is a question of happiness and success. This custom is productive of incalculable evils. Let the relation of church and pastor be more like that of husband and wife, indissoluble except for the weightiest reasons. It is a relation which God established. It is by divine appointment entirely essential to the welfare of the church and the progress of the cause of Christ in general. Why then should a question of a change be raised every twelve months, and with great injury

agitated? I confess I can see but one reason and that is that members may have a chance once a year to exercise their divine right to vote, and sometimes to electioneer on this most important question. Oh, liberty! thou art wounded in the house of thy friends! So delicate is this relation that all precautions, it would seem, should be taken, and all safeguards should be applied to preserve undisturbed the union of the church and pastor; but instead of this all the valves of discontent are opened, and fault-finding and scheming commence their work. This, instead of creating a presumption in favor of long pastorates, precipitates a change. It may be expected there will always be dissatisfied parties, and it can hardly ever be expected that any minister will give universal satisfaction; but disaffection, which would not otherwise have been heard of, will grow rank in the breach which the annual call of the pastor lays open.

What causes have prevailed to fix the custom of the annual call? Are the interests involved so trivial that the relation may be dissolved at every recurrence of the annual season? What has brought this high and holy responsibility so low that it has come to be regarded as of little more importance than hiring a field hand to make a crop? I can confess it seems to me that the custom of making a yearly call threatens to render ineffective the pastoral relation. How can a minister, in any true sense be a pastor of a people whom he does not know? To be a pastor indeed, he must be acquainted with the people and their wants. He must be in sympathy with them, and they must feel his sympathy. He must have a hold on their affection, so as to guide them rightly in spiritual things. This implies not a temporary connection, but permanent oversight and care. I submit

that one cause which has helped to fix the custom of the yearly call, is the erroneous conception which has prevailed of the pastor's office and duties. It has become common in certain parts to look upon preaching as the one work of the pastor. Churches talk of their "supply," and they mean by this term the one who comes and preaches from the pulpit. In many places the members feel that, provided they have some one to preach for them at the church house, it is all that is needed. And as the preaching is the one service considered, the "supply" can readily be changed without interference with the routine of church work. The living influence of the pastor as a power for good is too often not considered, and also the importance of his attention to individual members of the community. It is not claimed that this is the only cause of so frequent pastoral changes. The preacher himself is not infrequently the cause, by failing, from lack of proper preparation and devotion to duty, to meet the demands of his charge, and, not uncommonly, by looking for a better place which, when found, often turns out to be no better.

The evils of frequent changes of pastors are plain enough. It unsettles the whole church business, and many a time the change is not for the better. Besides this we must consider the evils it inflicts on the minister, necessitating a removal with its unavoidable expense, the breaking up of cherished associations, attachments and sympathies, and the placing him in another field for a new trial. It brings the church to a halt, and frequently leaves it standing a long time without pastoral care. Then the work stops and interest in everything declines.

While it is not claimed that this custom is the one

cause of so frequent changes in the pastorate, yet it is a very fruitful cause, and should be discontinued. No arrangements can ever be made which will be entirely satisfactory, but when an arrangement is made let it be permanent. Call for no specified time, but call permanently.

The bone of contention at Bethany was the two Sunday services. In the call that was given this fall the church proposed one fourth of my time and two hundred and fifty dollars. As I was unwilling to assume the responsibility of so large and diversified a congregation for so small of part of my time, I declined the call. The church then chose Bro. Chastain, but as he preferred the mission work of the Association, he did not accept. At the next meeting my name was withdrawn, but a large number voted for me, and on a second ballot they were in the majority. A motion was made to renew the former proposition. I could not doubt but that a greater part of the church desired me to continue as their pastor, and I was certainly anxious to maintain my relations with them. The difference between us had reference to the time they should pay me for, since I was not then willing to take the care of the church at any amount of pay for one Sunday. So I proposed as a compromise that I would serve them half my time for three hundred dollars, provided they would allow me to teach school, and on this we agreed. I knew it was not a desirable arrangement for the church, yet it seemed the best that could be made under the circumstances.

My other churches renewed the arrangements of the previous year without any noteworthy difference.

I now began to look about for a place to open a school. I visited the community of Rawl's Springs near

the New Orleans and Meridian Railroad, which had recently been built. In this community are situated certain springs that are somewhat famous for the medicinal properties of their water. I found that a new church had been constituted in the community under the labors of Eld. H. B. Cooper, and a new house was going up on the bank of Mineral Creek. I made some pleasant and valuable acquaintances but had no success in founding a school; they were already supplied with a teacher. I was invited by some gentlemen at Williamsburg to undertake a school there. It had for a long time been considered a good opening. Covington County had been able to boast of but a single school of any permanence, the one at Mt. Carmel, and that was on the decline. It had been given this year to Prof. Woodward of Vicksburg. Thirty miles distant was Columbia, where Mr. Summers had a flourishing school. About the same distance was Ellisville where Eld. J. T. Barrett was teaching with success. A fact which at the time was unknown to me, Prof. now Eld. Dixon was just opening a school twelve miles southeast, and about the same distance to the east, Eld. J. N. Walker, another Baptist minister who had recently moved into the county was beginning a school; so that there were now schools all around and I was shut up to the community of Williamsburg for patronage. Some of the citizens here were extremely anxious, and ready to make any sacrifice to secure an efficient teacher. My most reliable supporters were Evan Hall, County Clerk, and T. C. Blount, a merchant. I moved to town, engaged board with Mr. McCallum the hotel keeper, a very excellent gentleman, and commenced a school in hope of building it up. In addition to the competition mentioned above, the following con-

siderations made against the school. (1) An uncomfortable house which rendered the school a most disagreeable place in bad weather. (2) A lack of public spirit and interest in education among most of the citizens. Only a few earnestly supported the school. (3) My own interest was largely absorbed in something else. I had resolved to neglect my churches just as little as possible. If either should suffer I preferred it should be my school. Salem was near by, but Bethany was nineteen miles off. Bunker Hill was a little farther on, so that it was necessary to leave the town on Friday evening, and I could not be there at all on Sunday to mingle with the people. Moreover, I could not consent to relax my general studies. I laid in a supply of books on science, history, poetry, with some Greek and Latin classics. (4) My tuition had been made full high. My patrons allowed me to fix it to suit myself and I made it high enough, and too high for some people. I had never been noted for sociability, and now the daily care of the school-room and other things with my studies made me as exclusive as I well could be. Oh, sensitiveness! why dost thou scourge me so? But what position is like that of teaching school? You come into daily contact with the parents whose children you teach. You are playing on harps of a thousand strings. Who knows what the people are saying about you? What will Mr. A. say of your treatment of his son the other day? Why, even your pupils criticise you, and much more the great public. If you lend yourself to catch every criticism which may be made, and keep your mind at work conjuring up others, of which nobody else has ever thought, you will surely live in hot water. But oh, sensitive teacher, throw aside your

timid apprehensions. Mingle freely with the people; show them that you appreciate them. Acknowledge your failures, by meeting on a common plane of humanity, and do not expect to make yourself perfect and revered by living the life of a hermit. Live and move among the people. Let them not feel that you are a selfish, uncaring and unfeeling critic. Show charity for them and they will be charitable to you.

A question comes up here which I can not pass over without discussion—namely, the propriety of pastors teaching school. It is a well understood business principle that one, as a rule, can not succeed in two different callings. To attain to fair success in any business in which there is much competition demands one's whole attention. A man will commonly do better for himself in the long run to devote his efforts exclusively to that business or pursuit for which his talents best suit him, rejecting all temporary inducements to divide his energies. The pastor who engages in teaching forfeits to a great extent the support of his church. The members will take note of the fact that he is no longer giving himself exclusively to the ministry. They realize that he is not giving them his whole time. Hence, they will feel under less obligation to contribute to his support, and in proportion as he loses their support financially, he has lost their moral and spiritual support. If the members feel that the pastor depends entirely upon them, and is devoting himself fully to their service, they may be induced to give freely and generously, but on no other consideration. Moreover, there is a popular sentiment that a minister, of all men, is not allowed to seek after the wealth of the world. Let him begin school teaching and many can not look at in any other way than

that he is doing it as a money making business. A respected * brother once said to me, "I think it is better if a pastor is going to do any kind of secular work for him to farm." There is reason in the remark as it applies to a country pastor ; for, in this occupation he will not seem to have the advantage of his brethren in the matter of making money ; and, besides, even a preacher is allowed to have a home. But there is in my mind a more weighty reason against the pastor teaching school, and that is the secularizing influence it will have on his people. Let the pastor hamper himself with any worldly pursuit, and in vain will he seek to inspire his people with zealous and self-sacrificing devotion. Example is more potent than precept. Your opinion may be very correct, your advice may be most excellent ; but unless your conduct corresponds you can not influence me. Yet, as all rules have exceptions, and exceptions prove the rule, it may sometimes be necessary for a preacher to teach school. It is any man's first duty to provide for his family.

The reason on which a minister has a right to expect and demand support is, the universal obligation for a man to live by his labor. A preacher is not an exception to the rule laid down to Adam : "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground ;" and the special kind of work by which a preacher is honorably to make a living is stated in I. Cor. ix. 13, 14 : "Know ye not that they which minister about sacred things, eat of the things of the temple, and they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar." Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel.

*J. N. Burkett.

Any man, whether lawyer, doctor, merchant, mechanic, farmer, or preacher has the right to give away his labor, provided he can afford to do so; and there may arise occasions when he ought to do it; but to claim that he has no right to demand remuneration, is to take away the means of honorable support, and make him a dependant, a vagrant, and a beggar. Experience has proven that, as a general thing, when a man leaves the question of his support to the option of other people, he goes destitute. As to how much a preacher ought to receive, will depend on the worth of the teacher, the ability of the church, and other circumstances.

This states the principles which should be followed. But if a minister is not sufficiently renumarated to insure the support of those dependent on him, he is bound to provide for them in some other way. The day has been when this duty was sadly neglected. Ministers felt that they ought to go and preach, expecting nothing, and they did so, inspired with a holy zeal to save souls and to honor their Master; and an undutiful public did not feel bound to support them. Thus, while revered ministers have gone forward, animated by the worthiest motives, their families have been left destitute; their bright sons and lovely daughters have had to take a lower seat.

But it may be said that this exception can not apply to young unmarried preachers. But young ministers are rarely free from responsibilities on account of near relatives, and while they have no family at present, they have, at least, a future prospect, and no man is justified in assuming such responsibilities without assurance of temporal support. Besides, it can not be of any real benefit to a church to pay her pastor less than a fair re-

muneration, regardless of his circumstances. "The laborer is worthy of his hire." As for me, I had left college with a considerable debt of borrowed money. A brother and a sister looked to me for support, and the Theological Seminary was still in view. I could not think of addressing myself to life's work without every possible advantage.

Much good can be done in the school-room. The teacher may bind the young to him, and often families may, by this means, be reached who could not otherwise be influenced. Indeed, it may sometimes occur that this will be the very best way of building up a religious interest, and school teaching may for a time be followed without any of the evils above enumerated. But it must be borne in mind that this is the exception and not the rule, and the preacher should consider whether he will not lose more than he will gain.

My school at Williamsburg remained small. It never drew to itself popular and universal patronage. With the exception of a month lost on account of measles it continued uninterrupted to the end. As I had to leave town at the close of each week, I was never present to engage with the people in worship. There was preaching regularly by the Baptist missionary pastor, also by the Methodist circuit rider, and occasionally by the Presbyterian clergyman. On Wednesday nights, at the schoolhouse, we kept up a prayer-meeting. I have often gone there to meet only one or two brethren. We hoped that the example which we were then setting might be followed in other days.

The one pleasing recollection of my work that year is that the school did not secularize me. I strove not to neglect my churches, and labored continually

to advance the benevolent enterprises of the denomination.

A kind of meeting which proved of much interest and profit was the mass-meeting. These meetings were held on the fifth Sunday, and sometimes on Friday and Saturday before. In them subjects pertaining to Christian work and doctrine were discussed. They not only afforded instruction, but encouraged, also, social intercourse between different communities, and were a perpetual stimulus to Christian duty.

The Church of Antioch at Poplar Springs was constituted May 31st of this year (1884) with 34 members. The officers were: N. C. Hathorn and N. L. McNeese, deacons; C. S. Brinson, treasurer; John Baker, clerk. I had been preaching here for two years on Saturday before the first Sunday; Bro. Chastain had also kept an appointment here for six months. As the pastor of Bethany of which this had been a recognized arm, the new church desired me to continue to supply them for the remainder of the year, since they were under certain financial obligation to the pastor of the mother-church.

The new church began immediately to build a house of worship. The only objection to their plan was that the building was too small.

About this time, also, a house of worship was begun at Williamsburg. The members were poor and not much disposed to undertake the work of building, but the pastor urged it, and he and myself, in order to insure success, agreed to put each one hundred dollars into it, and to risk collecting these amounts from the public generosity. It was necessary for me to borrow my hundred, and my worthy confrere, who happened to

be flush at that time, made me the loan. I succeeded in collecting about ninety dollars. The money advanced was turned over to Deacon J. R. Webster, with the understanding that he would build the house; and he did build it, assuming the rest of the responsibility. Soon the Methodists followed suit and built a good house of worship. This is one time we got ahead of the Methodists.

I had arranged to spend my leisure time this summer at Rawl's Springs, about thirty miles southeast of Williamsburg. I made the house of Bro. B. F. Rawls my home. While stopping there I chanced to attend, a few days, the protracted meeting of the new church, which had been called Central. It was here that I first met the pastor, Eld. H. B. Cooper. The railroad from Meridian to New Orleans had just been built. The Baptist State Mission Board was planting churches along the line of the road. Elder Cooper was one of their men. He was the entering wedge in this section to the splendid work which has since been achieved under Elders Ray, Robinson, Barret and others.

At the close of the meeting at Central, a motion was made by Deacon Carter to call a council of the churches that were situated between Pearl and Leaf Rivers, to meet at Leaf River church, at the time of the August mass-meeting, for the purpose of considering the propriety of forming a new association. This move had been talked of for many years and was now beginning to take shape.

CHAPTER XII.

Formation of the New Association.—The Question, How to Maintain Church Prosperity? Considered.

I hastened back from the Mississippi Baptist Convention, in July, in company with Bro. Bush, to commence a meeting at Salem. We reached the church on Sunday morning. Brethren J. N. Walker and J. L. Finley had commenced the meeting on Saturday before. We put in a week's solid work. It was not, however, a time of harvesting. None were added to the church. At Bunker Hill I was assisted by Brethren R. R. Turnage and J. R. Carter, a young minister of Pearl River Association. Several were added as the immediate results of the meeting. At Bethany I again expected Elder A. V. Rowe, of Clinton, but on account of sickness in his family he failed to come, and I secured the assistance of Elder Bush. One of the best meetings I ever took part in was the result.

On Saturday, before the fifth Sunday in August, occurred the mass meeting of the Pearl River Association. Brethren Gambrell, editor of the *Baptist Record*, and Ball, Secretary of the State Mission Board, were with us. The meeting was one of unusual interest. The subject of most concern to some of us was the formation of the new Association. The following are some of the reasons for this movement: Two churches in the north-eastern part, Leaf River and Salem, had formerly belonged to Ebenezer Association, but as that body was con-

nected with the General Association of South Mississippi, these two churches withdrew and united with the Pearl River Association, that they might co-operate with the State Convention. This made the territory of the latter association quite extensive on both sides of Pearl River. The new church at Center desired to co-operate with the Convention, and there was no Association of



H. M. LONG.

the same mind near at hand. There was an extensive scope of country lying between Pearl and Leaf Rivers, which was well nigh destitute of religious advantages. The Presbyterian churches, which had once been strong, were evidently declining. The Protestant Methodists, who had several churches in this district, were likewise retrograding rather than going forward, and the Episcopal Methodists, in the same section, appeared to be in a

state of decadence, while there were some communities almost entirely destitute, where it was thought Baptist churches might be built up and maintained. The new Association would cultivate this field; moreover, the churches east of Pearl River were not, in any special way, identified with those west of that stream. And finally must be added the argument of convenience. There were no reasons urged against the project, except apprehensions that it might not be for the best. So the messengers decided to advise their respective churches at the coming session of the Association to withdraw for the purpose of forming a new body.

On Saturday, before the second Lord's Day in September, the Pearl River Association convened with Hepzibah Church, in Lawrence County. The following churches asked letters of dismission: Bethany, Bunker Hill, Salem and Leaf River. The delegates from these churches designated Salem, Covington County, as the place for organizing the new Association, and Saturday, before the first Sunday in November, as the time.

At the time appointed the churches withdrawing from the Pearl River Association, with Central from the Chicksahay, and the newly constituted churches of Antioch and Williamsburg, met and were organized into the Pearl Leaf Association. A subscription of one hundred and fifty dollars was raised to employ a missionary. Elder T. D. Bush was the man selected, and engaged for one-fourth of his time to labor in destitute communities.

The previous year's arrangement was renewed with all my churches.

I here feel that I must wander a little from the road. I have frequently experienced when traveling a long journey, that it was refreshing to turn aside for a few min-

utes for rest and meditation. What shall be the interjection which I shall throw in here? What the subject of our musings? We are in the midst of a little movement down here in the pine woods; new churches are springing up in quick succession—houses of worship are being built. Old relations are breaking up and a new Association is forming.

Suppose we take this for the subject of our meditation: How to Maintain a High State of Life in the Churches. You have noticed that when a new church is constituted under favorable auspices it goes forward for a few years with great momentum—like a man jumping after he has taken a running start, or like a rubber ball which has just received a blow from a bat. Now the problem is, how to keep the church running the same way? After a year or two, you know, it is almost sure to decline. The enthusiasm will fall off; coldness will creep in and lie down. How shall this be prevented? Or, if it is an old church, partially paralyzed, how may it be permanently revived? Well, now, it is evident that when the church is started, everybody is interested. The very novelty of the thing, the enthusiasm aroused in the beginning of the new enterprise will enlist all the members; everybody is willing to work; there is no opportunity for indifference; moreover, all are in a good humor. If Bro. Simms has anything against Bro. Johnson it must be overlooked now, for fear it would injure the new enterprise. All are rejoicing in the new, sweet fellowship of brethren. The world sees it and smiles, and lends a hand to help, and members come flocking in. But don't you almost know that this delightful condition is not going to continue? Something is almost sure to happen that will interfere. Can any

steps be taken to prevent this downfall and backsliding, which is otherwise sure to come? Well, I lay it down as a truth which can not be successfully contradicted, that the same causes which have produced these good feelings and this happy condition should keep them up; the members must be kept enlisted. Do n't let them think that as soon as the church is constituted, the house built, and "we have called our supply," the work is all done, and "we will lay back on our oars and let the church run itself." Here is the trouble. The work has just begun, we have just got in shape to work. It may be that we have been working all this time for ourselves, and now we are ready to work for Christ. "Ah," the members say, "we are fixed so we can have meeting close to home. We are all right." Church-house finished, preacher called, nothing more to do. This I fear is not work for Christ. If we are to work for Him, there is no end—no rest till death.

It is a matter of prime importance to keep everybody busy, otherwise the church is in danger of retrograding. And it must be said that the whole existence of some churches is employed in retrogression, with an occasional revival. Keep at the work all the time to bring sinners to Christ. Keep the prayer-meeting warm. Look after the wretched, the out-casts, the needy. Bring the children to Christ. Lead the young to the Saviour. Cheer the old and afflicted with the comforts of religion. Seek out and console the broken-hearted. Take up frequent collections. Serve the Lord by bringing offerings to His treasury. Teach all the people to give, for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver, and the liberal soul shall be made fat. Many are the benevolent enterprises in Christ's kingdom which appeal to us for support. We

are the Lord's stewards, to whom He has intrusted His goods. Hence, we should make the people familiar with the contribution box. They will soon see that it is a proper instrument of service. Organize such societies among the members as are necessary and practical, and by all means keep everybody at work. Your church should be all the time gaining strength, and become lively, prosperous and happy.

CHAPTER XIII.

School Teaching at Mt. Carmel.—Church Sociables and Festivals.

I had been solicited during the summer by one man, William Rutlege, to undertake a school at Mt. Carmel. I had always considered this a hard place for religion, especially for the Baptist faith. While I had some good friends here, I had no expectation of meeting any encouragement in my evangelistic work. Yet the community was near the center of my field, and I was anxious to get hold of the people, and if possible win them to me and to Christ.

A few years before there had been a fine school here. The educational interest seemed to have received an impulse under the teaching of Mr. John Watson. He was succeeded by Mr. Story, a Presbyterian minister, who for two years kept a fine school. His successor was Mr. Hodge, another Presbyterian preacher. Under him the school seems to have commenced to decline. The next year Mr. S. H. Hampton, a graduate of the University at Oxford, Miss., was employed. He had a very good school, but it never regained its former success under Story. The next year Mr. Woodward, from Vicksburg, was engaged. The measles interfered about the middle of the term, and the school closed; and now, in the absence of any other applicant, I secured a respectable number of pupils, and everything looked favorable for a successful term.

I had sojourned here a while two years before, and

now I returned to come into nearer relationship with the people of the place. At the same time a protracted meeting was begun at Mt. Zion Methodist Church, one mile from town. Rev. Mr. McClaurin was the circuit rider. He was assisted by Evangelist Hopper. It became a meeting of much interest. About forty united with the church.

My school filled up with lovable and teachable children. I have never seen children more well-bred. I was reminded of the words of Napoleon to the British sailor, as given in Campbell's poem, "A noble mother must have bred so brave a son." These children spoke much for the mothers of Mt. Carmel. The people of the town were intelligent and high-minded. The ladies were models of Christian womanhood. The men deported themselves toward me as gentlemen. There were no regular religious services held in town, not even a Sunday-school had been in successful progress for some time. The ladies, among whom Mrs. Magee was conspicuous as a Christian worker, had made some efforts to keep a Sunday-school, but they had not been successful. There was little commingling of the people in social intercourse. Every one seemed to understand pretty well the rule of attending to his own business. I engaged board with Mr. L. L. Benson, whose wife was a member of Bethany church. I never had a more agreeable home. A back room in the school-house was my lodging place.

I now devoted myself to the duties of the school-room and my churches. My situation was highly favorable to solitude, and I made the most of it. Situated in a naturally unsociable community, compelled to absent myself from Friday evening till Sunday night, with

a lodging-place away off in the school-house, and with free access to unlimited woods, where long ridges of pine were separated by valleys of richer growth, all inviting to retirement and rambling, the reader may imagine what the people of Mt. Carmel found to be a reality. I spent more of my leisure time communing with inanimate nature than with human beings, and arose sometimes from communion with nature to intercourse by faith with Him who speaks loudly through the denizens of the groves and the forests. I enjoyed little of the society of men except my pupils and my churches on Sunday. Left alone in my room, surrounded by my books, with the open woods before me, I became almost a hermit. Yet I was not oblivious to the benefits of social intercourse. Though not disposed to seek society, I yet felt the need of social culture for my own happiness, and conceived the project of introducing church sociables in the communities where I preached. I knew that such meetings were held in some churches in other parts of the country, and I was convinced of the necessity of them. I made the suggestion to Bethany church. My proposition was to have a gathering of all the community who would attend at the church house, whether they were members of the church or not; to have a nice dinner on the ground, and to spend the day in social intercourse. A short service was suggested, consisting of songs and an address by the pastor, with perhaps a closing religious exercise in the afternoon. Such a meeting, it seemed to me, would produce good results. It would give the pastor a chance to meet the people together and have a word with them. It would form acquaintances and cultivate friendly feelings among neighbors. It would tend to

correct the wrong impression of many young people that religion allows no enjoyment, or at least contributes to no pleasure. My proposition, however, was never carried out, and the experiment in this community remained untried. Not a few of the members thought it ill-advised.

The question of social entertainments is an important one. It has not received the attention from Christian workers that its importance demands. The custom among Baptist churches, especially in the country, has been to let entertainments look out for themselves, and they have commonly done so to the detriment of good manners and morals. A belief is not wanting among many that all kinds of social entertainments are productive of evil. This is one extreme; the other extreme approves of all kinds of entertainments, finding no evil in any. It is possible for any persons under the spirit of religious devotion to form severe ascetic habits and notions of life, and to be prepared to condemn all meetings held simply for social and friendly intercourse. But they will never succeed in bringing around to their way of thinking either the world or the church, especially the large body of young people who find pleasure in society as well as in the service of religion.

Human nature demands society. Youth will have it, if not under right circumstances, then under wrong circumstances. It is here that we have signally failed to hold our young people while the enemies of religion have gotten up parties, drawn to them the children despite all opposition from parents, and have captivated young hearts. The necessity of social meetings can hardly be questioned when we consider the strong tendencies of human nature that way. The only question is, "What

kind of meetings shall we have?" I must confess that I have never been favorable to parties gotten up especially for young men and young ladies, whether they were dancing parties, play parties, or so-called conversation parties. I could never see the necessity of such meetings. It has always seemed to me that young people have abundant opportunity to get together without holding parties especially for that purpose. I should not favor any social gatherings where old people and children are excluded, or where their happiness and comfort are not considered. The general sentiment of Christendom has proscribed the dance, and it is my opinion that the common play party, or social, especially for the young people, is a first cousin and should share the same condemnation. What I would advise, then, are social gatherings for all the people, whether the gatherings partake of the nature of a church sociable, Sunday-school picnic, literary entertainment, or old-fashioned dining or tea party.

I am impressed that the leading church workers of every community should have an eye to arrange such meetings and to see that they are conducted creditably and with proper order. In my judgment they should be considered a necessity and not an out-of-the-way affair.

Directly connected with this question is that of church entertainments to raise money.

All that I have said above in favor of church sociables has been intended for sociables simply, without the idea of raising money, which introduces a new feature and makes it an entirely different question. Of church entertainments for raising money, I have never been able to approve for several reasons, some of which I will here give :

(1) The Bible lends no encouragement to this way of raising means for the Lord's cause. The Scriptures enjoin giving from motives of love and gratitude, giving freely. Said Christ, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Again: "Give and it shall be given to you good measure; pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom." The appeal should be directed to the heart and conscience and founded on considerations of duty. Appeals may be made on the special demands of the situation, the relation of the parties concerned, and sympathy for fellow-men; and it is perfectly allowable to excite to emulation by mention of what others have done, or to stimulate pride by reference to what the same parties have done at other times. The apostle Paul made appeals on such considerations.

But I have found nothing in all the Bible which lends favor to the custom of raising funds for religion by entertainments. How think ye the apostle would have responded to a grand entertainment at Ephesus to assist the poor saints at Jerusalem, or to a church festival at Phillipi, to raise money for the missionary cause. This method does not comport with his simple plan, "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." Methinks the apostle would have broken out in something like the following, "Is it necessary for some one to hire you to give money to the Lord's cause? Is the love of Christ become so weak in you that you must be coaxed by the gratification of your carnal appetites to fill up the Lord's treasury? Who has turned you aside so quickly from the sincere service of the Lord Jesus Christ? for I declare unto

every one of you that I delivered to you no such gospel !” Let it suffice on this point that the Scriptures always and everywhere exhort and command to *give*.

(2) It fosters a dangerous spirit, namely materialism. The tendency of religion has ever been in this direction. Christianity, in its pure character, is essentially spiritual. The contrast in this respect between Christianity and Judaism was indicated by Jeremiah in the famous prophecy of the new covenant. “I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Our Saviour, in conversation with the Samaritan woman, emphasized the same contrast between the old dispensation and the new: “Jesus saith unto her, ‘Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the father. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and in truth.’”

I have spoken above of Christianity in its pure character; for, let it be borne in mind, that four-fifths of the Christianity in the world is badly adulterated; and this has been true almost ever since the apostles.

This is an age especially strong in its tendencies toward materialism. If it be claimed that this is an age of liberality, be it so; yet is there not danger that this liberality may proceed on materialistic ideas? Not all offerings made to God, or in the name of religion, are acceptable. Cain offered the fruits of the soil and was rejected. A prophet of God was constrained to protest against the shallowness of the worship of his day in these words: “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices, saith the Lord? When you come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to

tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; new moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies, I can not away with." Could we behold the heathen temples of Japan, India, and China, many of them would mock the costliness of our churches. Pagan temples have always rivaled in splendor and magnificence any buildings dedicated to the worship of the true God. The richest cathedrals raised to the worship of God in this country are not of the most orthodox or spiritual. Do not heathen religions and the most corrupt forms of Christianity propagate their faith by the same or similar organizations as we? The mere facts that we build many and commodious church houses, that we have a great following, or that we propagate our faith are not of themselves proof that we are advancing the true cause of Christ, or that we are saving the world. Christianity was originally the simplest of religions. Its early followers met together in private houses or rented halls, continuing in prayer and other religious services. The essential thing was to be a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth.

But soon that simple religion was arrayed in the combined apparel of Judaism and Paganism. Seated on the throne of the Cæsars it became the patron of all that was truly worldly.

Constantine, in the fourth century, might have done a greater thing for the world than making Christianity the State religion, and securing for it worldly patronage, if he had set himself to correct the errors in faith and forms which had already in his days made great progress, and had thus contributed his influence to promote spiritual religion.

Mammon easily holds his prestige as the god of the

world, and in this age when everything is reduced to a business basis, he seeks to make Christianity also a paying business. I have known camp-meetings held apparently for the purpose of making money, and they were not only countenanced, but generously patronized; and if I am not mistaken this element prevails in much of the religious service of to-day. The popular goddess that shares the throne of mammon in our age, is æsthetics. All the world seems eager to do her homage. Art, science, business, fashionable society and religion, all are laid under contribution to glorify taste. Money is eagerly raised. It makes not much difference how or by what means, provided we attain our preference—refined materialism. In the church's adoration to this splendid deity, as is to be expected, spirituality is made subordinate.

The inconsistency of this deification of mere taste is apparent enough, but who has courage to strike the serpent that beguiles us a death blow? It is beautiful and charming. Oh! it is so nice. So we take it to our bosom with the hope that there can not be any harm in it, since it is so pleasing, and the instrument of so glorious a cause. In an assembly of theological students, met in the interest of missions, one of the number made the statement that his mission had been about thirty dollars in debt, but that he had held a candy pulling and had raised most of the money. The incongruity of the two ideas was sufficient to produce a unanimous giggle, but no one was found bold enough to condemn the practice. "Nothing succeeds like success."

Taste, in itself, is not a bad thing, nor is making money; but when religion is made a convenience for gratifying taste, or making money, it is prostituted, and

when social entertainments are used as an engine for raising contributions for religion, the true motive power is not felt. A dish is prepared for the palate to induce the partaker to give to the cause of Christ. I can not see it in any other light than that of Christianity lifting her hat to materialism.

(3) It inculcates a false idea of Christian service, and thus leads minds astray.

Church entertainments are gotten up commonly by good Christian workers, whose motives and purposes are the purest. I say commonly, not always; for, on account of the social element, and the money involved, these entertainments are coming to be favorites with pleasure-seekers, and with those who want the financial patronage of the church; who, at certain times, will become very much interested in the church's welfare. But commonly they are gotten up by good Christian workers, and conducted with ardent, though, as I believe, misguided zeal. It is advertised that an entertainment is to be given for this or that religious purpose; its claims are pressed on the ground that it is for the benefit of the church. It clamors for patronage on this consideration. The idea is held out that those who are patronizing the entertainment are giving to the Lord's cause, and will receive the blessings promised, all of which is misleading. It is a delusion, worthy of the devil, who beguiled the woman. It is, in fact, I believe, a scheme of the same, sly, old serpent, to get people to serve themselves under the pretense of serving God. I am bold to say that in the patronage of such entertainments, as a rule, there is no service to God. Some, indeed, may contribute with a view simply and singly to God's glory, but the inducement is strong the other way.

Those who are sincere, and do it simply for a religious purpose, must feel that such a method of raising religious contributions is a farce. I can not see how they can engage in it without feeling conscientious scruples that they are compromising religion with the world. Why not have some fascinating images of the deity made and placed in the church—of course, with the understanding that these representations are nothing in themselves, but that they are designed simply as an aid to the worship of God? They would appeal powerfully to the sentiment, and would induce many a person who will not bow down to the awful, the spiritual, the unseen God, to come in and bow down and kiss the image and contribute something, too. It is a great aid to have some object in sight, something which appeals to the sense and draws forth worship and money. There is no harm in the object itself, whatever it be; and by this means you will induce many to worship God.

The Church is giving herself away. She is pandering to the world for the sake of the world's patronage. This means, simply, conformity to the world's idea. It has ever been the pride of this world's spirit to patronize a religion that maintains the form of truth, but denies its power, that feigns to be for God, but has nothing in common with the spirit of God.

Such a religion pleases the world, and whatever pleases the world has much in its favor. It makes little difference with the Satan what men worship, so they do n't worship God in the spirit and in truth. He will doubtless give us the world if we fall down and worship him. It pleases him equally well for men to worship themselves as to worship him. Yea, he is seldom so bold as to seek the devotion of even poor human creatures, in

his own name and garb. He is fully satisfied if they will give adoration to something else under the name and guise of Christian service. And he is never so dangerous as when he assumes the form of an angel of light.

The impression is made on the world that to be a Christian is not so serious a thing. It does not necessarily call for any sacrifices. Religion can be supported incidentally by ministering to our own worldly pride or pleasure. This method exalts self-indulgence above the direct and pure worship of God.

The world feels the effect of this, but does not see its inconsistency, because they do n't know what spiritual religion is. It is all right with them. They are willing to support the church if you will make the method conformable to their taste or pleasure. This has been the policy of the Church of Rome, and she has succeeded well. Why should not we successfully employ the same tactics? But the evil is produced that the people get the wrong idea of religion, and all our preaching and singing and formal ceremonies may not correct it. Too many conceive that in joining the church they are joining simply a social, moral institution to which all really cultivated people are expected to belong, which will give them social prestige, put them into fellowship with the better class of society, and which, while it restrains them from immoralities, will give them a pleasant transit through this world, and deliver them safe into heaven at last.

(4) As I have already intimated, this method dries up the spirituality of the church. Spirituality is the life of Christianity. It is the heart's service to God. However praiseworthy or beneficent an act may be, performed from any other motive than love to God, it is not a spiritual act.

Read in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians the essential value which the apostle places on love in any religious service. Now it is contended that the method of raising money by festivals, social pleasures, amusement and extravagance, can not enhance the spiritual life of those who participate in them ; but that it does promote a worldly spirit, and a cold, artistic patronage of religion, without any real heart worship. While spiritual religion is not opposed to social enjoyment, making money, or to any harmless amusement, it is entirely independent of them, and must be the source of all acceptable service to God.

Religion does contribute incidently to business prosperity, social order, and whatever is right and desirable. But the method under question reverses this order. It makes social fellowship, the gratification of the appetite, amusement a means of religious service, and the consequence is the true worship of God is made subordinate to worldly considerations. It proposes to run religion on the same principle as fairs, or other business and social enterprises. Whatever does this degrades religion, yea, destroys it.

Giving to the Lord is as much an act of service as praying, singing or teaching. Giving directly from convictions of duty, motives of love and gratitude, tend powerfully toward the development of spirituality and growth in grace ; but the method of raising money by entertainments, not only neglects and fails to cultivate this spirit, but fosters another that is directly opposed to it, namely, the spirit of self-interest and self-service. It thus tends to dry up the fountain of pure benevolence and throw the church for dependence on appeals to selfishness. It may be claimed that it has produced no such

results. My answer is that in many places it has produced such results; not, it may be, in the strongest centers of Christian activity, but in remote and less fortified places. It has become a common means of raising money for every purpose, and is regularly depended on. In such a locality one can not but be impressed with the utter worldliness of spirit that characterizes the church. Spiritual power is, to a great extent, gone. It is not felt by the world. The Church has lost her drawing power.

This custom is comparatively a recent development. It must be borne in mind that all the corruptions of the church's faith and practice have had small beginnings. The fact that great men approve this custom is a weak argument in its favor, for what mischievous practice has not been advocated and encouraged, both in its incipency and its further progress, by some great men, and looked upon with toleration by others. It is hardly probable that we shall, in this age, develop anything so crude as masses for the dead, and the sale of church indulgences; but it is altogether probable, so long as human nature remains unchanged, that we shall be drifted into the quicksands or thrown upon the breakers, that lie contiguous to the current of the age in which we live.

(5) This custom leads to other evils. It is often the cause or occasion of extravagant expenditures of money, for what is not an equivalent. It leads to undue ornamentation and finery, means to purchase which can not be obtained otherwise. It grows by what it feeds upon. It often imposes itself upon the community in the form of lotteries. It is also favorable to levity and revelry. It is claimed that it is beneficial on account of the social feature; but so far as that is concerned, I hardly think that the society which offers itself for the consideration

of a dime or a quarter, is much worth courting. I have been told, in reference to the entertainments held in a certain city, that the best class of young ladies do not generally attend them, nor the young men either. I can not speak of my own knowledge, but this is exactly what I should expect.

(6) This method of raising money is not necessary, and, in the long run, will not pay. It proceeds on the supposition that money, for the cause of Christ, can not be raised without such means. Or, in other words, that they are necessary to the advancement of Christianity ; that is to say, that the cause of Christ can not so well run itself according to the methods known in the Bible, namely, direct free will offerings. If this claim be true, it furnishes a sufficient ground for money entertainments. Money is necessary to run the cause of Christ. Money must be had ; if those who possess it will not give it, then some efficient method must be devised to secure it from them by indirect means. There need not be anything immoral or uncivil in the money entertainment. The greatest evil is that it places the support of religion on a wrong basis, thus tending to deaden spiritual sensibilities, extinguish real benevolence, and in this way weaken the true support of religion. Yet, under some circumstances, it may be better to support religion on a wrong basis than not to support it at all. So the religious money entertainment may have been a revolt against parsimony, and may have contributed, to some extent, to break up a reign of covetousness which refused to afford the money necessary to support the cause of religion. In this light it may have deserved some recognition as the lesser of two evils. Possibly, some good results have been produced. If so, it will not be the first time that

good has been brought out of evil. If this be the proper explanation of the rapid prevalence of this custom, may it not be hoped that on a better understanding of the needs of the cause of Christ, and our obligation to contribute regularly and liberally, together with the blessings, both temporal and spiritual, guaranteed to the giver, this custom will fail for the lack of any further need of it. But such a claim seems to invalidate the efficiency of Christianity, and make it dependent on shrewd shifts and devices which belittle the religion of God, dethrone it from the heart and conscience as the supreme motive power of human conduct, and make it a helpless dependent, hanging to the apron strings of the world's society for patronage and support.

This supposition is hardly true. The cause of Christ, I should think, is fully able to take care of itself, when its claims are properly presented, without appeals to any exterior motives.

If the same means were spent and the same time and trouble bestowed in efforts to teach the people what they owe to the Lord, and the duty of making frequent and free contributions to His treasury, there would be an abundance of means to meet the demands of all work for Christ, without the expense of the church's spiritual life. Why then is this method pursued with such alacrity? Three reasons may be noted. The first, is to avoid working for the cause and giving of one's own earnings. The second, the strong disposition to get something for nothing, a feat which is often successfully accomplished at these entertainments, and the third is to shirk the unpleasantness of teaching people their duty, and soliciting contributions to the Lord's cause. It is so much more delightful and flattering to vanity to get

up a thrilling entertainment that will capture the people and bring in the money by the mere charm of the occasion. A fourth reason may be added, namely, the success which often attends the method.

A proper analysis of this question will discover no less than four elements at work :

1. There is a steadily increasing demand for contributions. That is a good sign. It clearly shows an awakening on the subject of religious duty.

2. The business-like spirit of the age, which tends to make every enterprise, even religion, pay in material wealth.

3. A growing recognition of the propriety and necessity of social cultivation and its consistency with genuine religion.

* 4. An increasing appreciation of the beautiful, or artistic in religious worship, together with the ever-abiding disposition to make religion pleasing—to conform it to our preference. All these elements are united in the church festival or religious money entertainments.

We shall make a mistake if we do not recognize these tendencies and direct them in a proper way.

To meet the demands for increasing religious contributions calls for more instruction as to the duty of giving. The money is in the world to carry on the Lord's cause, and it will be forthcoming when the claims of that cause are sufficiently presented and pressed ; but there is need for much teaching on this subject.

We need a book on the obligation and blessing of giving, bringing out clearly and succinctly the real spiritual

* See a sermon by Dr. John A. Broadus. Sermon and addresses, pp. 11-26.

doctrine on that subject. Who will give it to us? More tracts and pamphlets treating of it are demanded. More preaching about it, more private agitation and instruction are demanded. The needs of the various fields of work must be more clearly presented, and systematic plans devised and put into execution for soliciting contributions, and stimulating example by frequent collections.

As to the second of these tendencies, it must be borne in mind in the midst of this business world, that Christianity is a divine and holy business that does not seek patronage at the hands of worldly society, and can not itself be made to subserve any worldly interest, except as it incidentally promotes whatever is good in all relations. It has for its aim the salvation of souls and their training for a future life. It is itself the highest object of human effort, and can not be made subordinate to anything. It claims dominion over the heart and conscience, and is the strongest motive power of human conduct.

As to the third of these tendencies, it is evident that human nature has a social element, and there is no reason why the development of the social disposition should be restrained. Religion does not oppose social culture, but rather encourages it, and there are reasons why it should be taken into consideration and promoted in connection with religious work in the bounds of good morals and manners, particularly as it conduces to good feeling in society, and makes life pleasant and joyous. Only let not its culture be cherished as a means of supporting the church.

As to the fourth, we must employ some art in all our efforts of devotion and in all our arrangements for worship. The question of how much art is to be desired will depend, to some extent, on the art culture of the congre-

gation; but one principle is fundamental, namely, that all must be made subordinate to spiritual service. And nothing should be introduced that will interfere with the spiritual worship of the spiritual God. And let all the service, whether it be singing, praying, teaching or giving, be done from spiritual motives.

CHAPTER XIV.

Campaign on the Buoy.—Meeting of the Associations.—School at Blountville.

At the close of my school at Mt. Carmel, I held a week's meeting there. It was probably the first protracted meeting of a week's length that was ever held in the place. I preached morning and evening. My desire was to give them a series of simple unadulterated gospel sermons. Bro. Bush was with me, to aid me by his prayers, sympathy and exhortations. We had large and interested congregations. This was the winding up of my work at Mt. Carmel, and the beginning of the summer protracted meetings. It was the purpose of Elder Bush and myself to hold several meetings in the destitute parts where he was laboring as missionary. The section of country lay up and down Buoy, a large creek running three miles east of Mt. Carmel. Some years before there had been a Baptist church above Mt. Carmel, on or near this creek. But through some malice, its seems, the house was burned, the church went down, and was never revived. A new church, Little Whitesand, had been built some miles west of the place, but several members of the old church had not afterwards united with any other. One of these was Hardy Pittman. He had been a deacon of Harmony church and was formerly a man of some wealth, but his fortune was now gone, and he was scarcely able to live. Yet he still maintained his faith, and to some extent, his zeal for the cause of Christ.

I was satisfied that there was room for a church in the neighborhood of where this old man lived. There was also some other members of Baptist churches living in the community. It was northeast of Mt. Carmel. One evening on my way from Salem, I searched for the home of Hardy Pittmen. I found him in a little hut, a feeble man in his last years; yet still alive on the subject of church work. A man of sound faith and sense, ready to undertake anything for the Master's cause. I told him of my interest in this section of the country and of my earnest solicitude to commence work there.

His countenance lighted up and glowed with interest. He declared it had been his heart's desire and the burden of his prayers. A few years before a work had been begun in the community; a church had been constituted by a Bro. Webster, but it was neglected and soon went down.

After preaching at Bethany on the third Sunday in July, I hastened up into this region. I found Bro. Bush assisting the pastor of Little Whitesand, Elder R. A. Drummonds, in a meeting at a school-house west of Buoy. The meeting closed the day of my arrival and and both of the brethren being compelled to leave, we moved across the creek to a place called the Dog Wood. There was a little school house here, but it was too small and otherwise unsuited for a meeting house; some benches were arranged under a large spreading Dog Wood tree, and here for several days and nights meeting was held.

There were some excellent families in the community; but it was destitute of any religious advantages. Some of the people belonged to various kinds of churches at a distance, but the mass of the people belonged to no

church and attended no religious services. Here was one of my most sacred experiences. How delightful is it to preach to people, who have some appreciation of the benefits of the gospel, yet have been denied its privileges. How eagerly they listen to catch every word; how simply and reverently they behaved themselves. The gospel is a new sound to them, and they treat you very defferentially for the interest you take in them.

When the meeting closed I left a regular appointment here for Saturday morning once a month. In the fall the members were constituted into a church. A subscription of almost a sufficient amount was raised on the field to build a house of worship, but for lack of timely and energetic prosecution the project fell through.

At the beginning of the next year (1886), the new church was placed under the charge of the missionary. The next week, after my regular appointment at Salem, I held several days meeting at the Bird schoolhouse north of Williamsburg, preaching morning and evening out of doors to a good congregation. At the same time Elder Bush was carrying on a meeting on Buoy south of Williamsburg where shortly after a church named Victory was organized.

On the fifth Sunday in July a mass meeting was held at Antioch, three miles south of Mt. Carmel. It was of much interest and was greatly enjoyed. On Sunday night the missionary and myself crossed Bouy to begin a meeting at Black Jack, a Protestant Methodist church. I had never before come in contact with this denomination of Christians. They had thrown open their doors to the missionary and he preached here occasionally. We held meetings for several days together, and I then continued it by myself for a few days. There were no immediate

results, yet it was hoped that seed was sown which would germinate and spring up and grow until this community should rejoice in a glorious light of gospel liberty.

I was assisted in my meeting at Bethany by Eld. S. O. Y. Ray, who was under the employment of the State Mission Board.

He lived at Enterprise, and occupied the field which a few years before had been entered by Eld. H. B. Cooper.



S. O. Y. RAY.

Bro. Ray is a good preacher, an excellent worker, and a man of lovable disposition. A fine meeting was the result of our efforts, a soul reviving meeting, and many were added to the church.

At Salem I was assisted by Eld. H. M. Long, who a few years before was the beloved pastor of Salem and

Leaf River churches where he had accomplished a good work for this country. He was now located at Shuqualak.

We had an interesting meeting at Salem, also, and there were several additions.

At Bunker Hill, this year, I had no help in the ministry, but there was a good meeting.



T. E. H. ROBINSON.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in September was the time for the meeting for the Pearl Leaf Association, but on account of a severe storm of wind and rain the Association did not meet and organize until Sunday morning. The following address was read by the moderator.

“BRETHREN OF THE ASSOCIATION:—Through the mercies of God we are permitted to assemble in this our first anniversary meeting. On reviewing the past year

there are many things for which we should be profoundly grateful. The first of these is our existence as an Association. It is a matter for congratulation among ourselves and for thankfulness to God, that so many brethren from different localities in this section animated by one spirit and united on the same purpose have been brought together in one organized body.

Our ministerial strength has been increased by the valuable addition to our number of Eld. T. E. H. Robinson.* While our churches are few and their number will probably not be augmented at this meeting, it is encouraging to know that they are among the most substantial of the country. All of them have been self-sustaining during the past year. The majority have good Sunday-schools and are in a working and growing condition; while some have felt the special revival wave which has swept over the land, all it is to be hoped have made permanent progress. The destitution in our bounds has been partially supplied, and there has been occasional preaching, at least, in every community.

But while we should take courage from these results, we should not fail to realize the responsibilities of the future. The work is great, especially where we consider our numbers. There is no hope of great results but in fostering a spirit of progress and perpetual development.

One crying need in all our churches is increased spirituality. When we consider that the efficiency of the churches of Christ, in dispensing light and life to the world, depends on their own spiritual life, we have need to continually exert ourselves to deepen the tone of piety, and raise to a higher pitch the spiritual life and

* Eld. Robinson is a brother, much beloved, who has been instrumental in the conversion of a great many souls.

activity of our members; and we should spare no pains or labor to secure this result. More frequent meetings should be held. More and better preaching and pastoral work should be done; Sunday-schools, prayer-meetings, singing-schools, mission societies, the circulation and reading of Christian literature, are all means by which we should constantly seek this end.

Another defect in our church work is the failure to enlist many members, male and female, in contributions to our benevolent enterprises. We are embarrassed by the want of some business-like plan by which every member of the church can be reached and influenced to give to the support of the cause of Christ in all the diverse enterprises which promote that cause.

The mission work which has been begun in our midst should be prosecuted with redoubled vigor until the people of every community rejoice in the regular ministrations of the gospel. This seems to me to be a work to the demands of which every Baptist heart ought to respond with liberality.

Finally we must not forget that we are a part of the great brotherhood of the State and the South, identified with them in every enterprise which has for its end the furtherance of the Redeemer's kingdom."

One new church, Victory by name, was received at this meeting. The missionary was paid up and employed next year for half instead one-fourth of his time.

The next Saturday was the time for the convening of the Pearl River Association. I attended my church at Bunker Hill, and left Sunday afternoon for the Association which was to assemble forty miles distant, going across a section of country over which I had never traveled. I

was compelled to cross Pearl River. When I arrived on the bank of this stream I hallooed for awhile, for the ferryman was not in sight. I got off, hitched my horse, and walked up and down the road in impatience. Finally I espied an old conch-shell, and taking it up I began to blow, but it made no noise. I blew harder and harder; but the harder I blew the less noise it made. I began to think that something must be the matter with it, when, just then, I happened to give a gentle puff and it sounded greatly to my unexpected delight. After a long time of blowing and waiting I observed a woman on the further shore with a child in her arms, coming up to the river in great haste. She put the child down and commenced bailing out the water, and soon she was pulling the flat to my bank of the river. This was the first female ferryman I had met with in some years. The charge was one dime; but as I did not have the exact change, and she had no money at all, I was forced to go on my way without paying her, though I afterwards sent the money.

It was now growing late, almost night, and a long road lay before me. I had been informed that I should pass Sardin's church on the way, and had received definite instructions as to what roads to take. I rode on and on and on; night came, and still I rode on. At length I grew sorry for my pony and got down and walked. About eleven o'clock I came to a building on the side of the road which I knew from the appearance must be Sardin's church. I was at a loss which road to take; for there seemed to be three roads running off. I walked up and down some of the roads a short distance, hoping there might be a dwelling, but I found none. I remembered it had been said that I must turn to the right; so I took the first

right hand. It was pretty dark. The road led me down through an old field by a deserted place, where there had evidently been a dwelling. It grew dimmer and dimmer, and finally ended in a brake. I found myself out of the road in a thicket, my way in front closed up with undergrowth. My pony stealthily followed, while I held the rein. I was thoroughly convinced that this was not the way. I could do nothing but turn back to the church and try another road. So I did, taking the next right hand. Although it was quite dark I managed to keep the settlement road, leading my pony about a mile and a half, when I came to what appeared to be a store-house, with a dwelling to the right. I hallooed and whooped. I never knew people to sleep so soundly, but it was time to sleep, for it was evidently about twelve, and I was well prepared to join them in that business. Finally a man came out of the store-house, and I asked if I might stay over night. Whereupon he replied that there was a protracted meeting going on at the church and that he was overflowed with company and could not take me in. On inquiring the distance to the next house I learned that it was about a mile or two, more or less. I had no time to lose, for I wanted to sleep some that night, so I trudged along. Part of the time I seemed to be in an old untraveled road, but I had good luck to keep right, and finally I was facing a good looking dwelling to the left of the road. I shouted a few times, and the gentleman came out on the gallery in his night clothes, but to my bitter disappointment informed me that the protracted meeting which was going on at the church had filled his house with company. It was about two miles, he said, as well as I remember, to the next house. So I trudged on, my

pony following me. It began now to be a serious business.

After awhile I came into a large public road. I took the right hand, not knowing whither I went. It led me along between some large plantations, across a valley, and to the summit of a high hill, where the roads forked; but all this time I had seen no house. Not knowing which way to go, and seeing plantations around I determined to halloo, hoping to wake up a dog. So I took a long siege of hallooing, but only the echo came back. There was evidently nothing to do but to turn either to the right or the left, and, as I had been going to the right all night, I concluded to try the left. It soon led me down in front of a large dwelling, a few whoops brought the landlord to the door.

As I was now out of the neighborhood of Sardin's church there was no longer any excuse for not taking me in. The landlord, from his questions, evidently thought I had been on a spree, as I supposed the other gentlemen had thought. He asked me a good many questions as to why I was out so late, where I was from, whither bound, etc. I told him I was a Baptist minister and a messenger to a certain Association. He could hardly believe it, nevertheless he took me in. I noticed he eyed me suspiciously while we were putting my pony away, and knowing what he suspected I tried to walk perfectly straight. But who would not have been liable to stagger after riding fifteen miles and walking ten since dinner, it being now two o'clock A. M.

The name of my host was Bacot. The next morning he was still dubious as to my story. I offered to pay him for my lodging, but he refused. So we separated to meet no more till we meet with all the balance of our

brethren of Adam's race before the bar of God. May we both be prepared for the event.

It was sixteen miles to Pleasant Hill, where the association was holding its meeting. I had some trouble in finding the way, and got there only a short time before adjournment, just in time to take the parting hand. Dr. Webb, of Mississippi College, was there, and J. G. Chastain, who should leave that place for the seminary at Louisville.

In the morning I started back, though by a nearer route. About eleven o'clock I came to a church house. The people were gathering for meeting. As I knew of no Baptist Church in these parts, I took it for granted it must be of some other denomination. I passed the church, but continued to meet the people. At last one brother meeting me said: "Why, how are you, Bro. Powell? Aint this Bro. Powell?" and so I was known. I learned that this was a Baptist Church and concluded to go back and spend the day with them. Bro. Norris, from Hazlehurst, was the pastor. I preached in the forenoon from the Scripture: "These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." The pastor preached in the afternoon. A most pleasant day was spent with these saints in worshipping God. I stayed over night with the pastor at Bro. Criscoe's, a progressive farmer and a prominent member of the church. In the morning I pressed onward toward home. About eleven o'clock I was entering the historic little town of Monticello, situated on Pearl River. It had been once burned down, and then blown away by a cyclone, but was now building up again. Stopping in front of a certain store I was greeted by a voice which cried, "How do you do? I am glad to see you. Get down. Where

have you been? You are the very man I should have preferred to see. Is there any chance to get you to preach for us here? You are the man we want. Get down and take dinner with me." This was the familiar and cheering address of C. R. Dale, an enterprising merchant and a leader in Monticello church. The church had been left without a pastor by the resignation of Elder T. D. Bush. They had called J. G. Chastain, but he had gone to the seminary. I had at this time no thought of entertaining a call. I continued my journey until night, when I reached the pleasant family of W. M. Waller, in the neighborhood of Bethany.

It was now the autumn of 1885. The citizens of Blountville, which is the name of the postoffice near Bethany, were diligently agitating the matter of building up a high school. It had certainly been much needed for many years. They had talked about it before, and now they said they were in earnest. Indeed they had gone so far as to tear down the old academy which stood three miles above, and move the lumber to Blountville; and the sound of the carpenter's hammer was heard on the pile.

It had not commended itself to me as good policy to teach in the community where I was pastor. But some of the citizens thought I was the man, and there were some considerations which moved me favorably. I had that kind of interest in the community which one would have to whom it had been a chief concern for four years.

I was satisfied of the necessity of a high school as a means of improving the membership of the church. I am persuaded that people must be educated before they will make efficient workers in the cause of Christ. As

a rule the more intelligent the membership of a church the more they will do for the progress of religion. With this view education becomes a necessity. It is impracticable to raise to a high degree of zeal and activity in Christian service people who are uneducated. Education should be regarded as a means to an end. We should educate not that we may be religious, but being religious we must educate that we may do more work for humanity and for Christ. The Presbyterians are not nearly so strong⁷ in the United States as we are, yet they do more for Christian missions and other forms of benovolence. The reason is, I think, that a larger per cent. of their people are educated. Education broadens the range of view; it breaks down prejudice, quickens the understanding, cultivates taste, stimulates pride and raises the aspirations to do something. It is high time that we are vesting with due importance this aid to Christian work.

There was no point in the country which, according to my judgment, offered such advantages for a permanent school as this place. Not because it was noted either for health or culture, but there were more children in reach of this point than of any other country community in my knowledge, and their parents, generally, were able to send them to school. The village stood in a plain adjoining Whitesand Creek on the crossroads, one running north and south, connecting Columbia and the coast with the upper country, and the other running east and west between the two railroads. The people lived thick up and down on both sides of the creek.

I desired to establish a school of a high order, for nothing seemed to be appreciated that cost more than a dollar and a half a month. My hope was to unite all

the neighborhood schools on this point. On the assurance of support from leading men around I secured an assistant, Miss Katie Cavitt, an accomplished young lady, a graduate of Central Female Institute, who had for two years taught in an adjoining community. Our school opened amidst adverse surroundings. Various attempts were made to start schools in different parts of the community. One Sunday night, after preaching in the school-house, I was awakened about midnight by the cry that the school-house was burning down. Some party who had opposed the moving of the old building had secretly set fire to it and it was soon reduced to ashes. We secured an old dwelling-house near by and continued the school. In one month, such was the zeal of the citizens, a new house was ready to be occupied. There were many things which contributed to make our school pleasant. It was not, however, excessively large, nor was there perfect satisfaction in the community as to the management. Nevertheless we had a good school, and left the community in a better condition for a session. the next year.

- ODE TO BLOUNTVILLE.

Why in my thoughts such memories arise ?
Why in my highest mind dost thou abide ?
Thy hills, plains, groves, and walks enchanted seem.
Far from thy fields most pleasant breezes blow.
Not joy and ease a place to me endears,
But duty's pains and bliss from inner springs.
The church called Bethany, not distant, stood
Where saints, hampered by sin and buffeted,
Had yet hard battles fought in toils and tears,
And many a triumph won through grace of heaven,
Where God's own spirit loved to dwell, and pour
Forth rich effusions from the fount of his
Eternal love ; and Jesus, blessed Son,

And King alone, in Zion, ruled in midst
Of his own people dear by blood redeemed.
Within that ancient grove and house revered,
The Church of God has often met for praise ;
And after praise for social fellowship.
Then strife has ceased, and peace of love has reigned,
And heart to heart united effort joined
In purpose to promote the Master's cause,
Together bound by sympathy for man,
Degraded, lost where'er the race is found.
Near, too, flowed Whitesand, by shady banks,
From whose baptismal waters have emerged
A thousand converts true, as from a grave—
The emblem fit of changed and holy life.
Then earth was new and heaven's smiles approved,
The father's voice in secret said, "Thou art
My child ; well done. As thou to sin has died,
In ways of peace and righteousness live on."
Thy citizens were plain, of simple mould ;
Not skilled as yet in learned lore,
Nor cultured in refined art of life ;
Yet with hearts that op'ed to broad improvement,
Young minds were springing up as willing shoots,
Awaked by sun and showers fresh of spring.
Aloud they cried for culture and refinement,
To meet the wants of this progressive age ;
Nor fathers would desire their sons contend,
Nor mothers wish their daughters strive in life,
Unarmed as they themselves had been compelled.
Here, then, for character development,
A field there was of limits wide and long ;
And here I built my school. My heart was here.
I hoped not now to build to great extent,
For time was short, my work almost was done ;
But deep a foundation dig and lay the stones
Whereon might others build, if God should will.
The work was done, or good, or ill. A school
Was built, not least, though last of my intent—
But what result is seen ? What impress made ?
Not mete, it is forgotten ills to raise ;
The odor sweet alone should now remain,

Most blessed truth of earth's experience school.
The joy prevails when cares no more corrode,
With this one only sad reflection mixed,
These bitter blissful days can not return.
Delights restrained by pleasure's chords of love,
Unfailing bands that weave around the heart
Of teacher and of taught cases of steel.
There's that within the soul which neither life,
Nor death, nor trials of distress, nor care,
Can wring; nor time nor distance take away,
The form, yea, essence of those spirits which
Live ever green, and move within our life.
The album which I most prize is one of mind;
Their eyes that sparkle and lips that move,
Features that radiant glow with friendship light,
And hearts that speak to heart in words of cheer.
These treasures rich, more dear I hold than all
Pure worldly things. Possessed of other's selves,
We live, preserved in never dying thoughts,
To meet again, if pure in heart and true,
Where spirits freed from clay in heaven's bliss
Shall hold eternal fellowship of love.
When time is o'er, where far above the arch
Of yon blue vault, the tow'ring sky, for aye
We dwell, a company through faith select
In the city of light, in blest eternity.

CHAPTER XV.

'The Last Year in South Mississippi.—Off for Louisville.

The autumn of '85, which witnessed the beginning of the school at Blountville, brought with it my last year in South Mississippi. I was called to all of my churches, but some considerations interfered to prevent me from accepting the care of all. Bunker Hill, during the last two years, had fallen somewhat behind in the pastor's salary, and the community was financially very much pressed. The building of a church-house, the maintenance of an eight or ten months' school each year, and the support of the church, had contributed to put many behind, and so it seemed best to them not to assume any new obligations until they should catch up. The church agreed to pay me what was behind, and, having done this, requested me to serve them for whatever they could pay at the close of the year. This I could not do, as I did not think it best for the church at that time, nor wise for a precedent in the future ; and, besides, it would be contrary to all my teachings on the subject. Thus terminated my relations with this church and community, after a service of nearly four years. It was an issue to be lamented, yet, perhaps, it was rendered necessary by the circumstances. I have never censured the church, and, as to my own course, I leave it for those to judge who can render an impartial verdict. One thing, however, I would take occasion here to urge—the prompt payment of what is promised by a church to her pastor.

It is a matter of prime importance in the conduct of the church business that her finances be kept clear. Let her once become embarrassed by debt and it will work great ill every way. One reason of the common delinquency in the payment of the pastor is the custom of putting off collections until the crop is sold. There is a false notion at the bottom of this custom. It is this: that all necessities must be arranged for first, and then the surplus dollar given to the minister. Now, if it is the duty of members of the church to support the Gospel, it is certainly a necessary duty, and equally urgent with any other. It is true that all members do not have money at any time of the year, yet there are few that can not pay their subscription quarterly, even if it be necessary for them to borrow. It would be better for every member to borrow a small amount once and awhile than for the pastor to run extensively in debt. It is to the church's interest that her pastor keep out of debt, and she can do much to keep him from debt if she pays a living salary, by paying it promptly along through the year. This can be done as well as not, and there will not be such an amount to raise, all at once, at the last.

Bethany was intent this year on having services but one Sunday in the month. In my pastorate here there has been, from the first, an issue involved, namely, an increase of religious services. This issue was not popular. It called for more work and for more sacrifices. The policy attempted in this respect was in striking contrast with all the other churches of the country, and grew more and more unpopular from year to year. The church this year proposed a salary of two hundred dollars for one Sunday, and I, knowing that this was my

last year in the county, and desiring to maintain my relation with this church, so long as I should remain, accepted on the condition that I should be released the last of September, which was finally agreed to.

Having resigned Bunker Hill, and given up one Sunday at Bethany, I had now but half of my time occupied. This opened the way for a brief pastorate at Monticello, and gave me one idle Sunday.

The Monticello Church was weak. The town was slowly recovering from the cyclone which a few years before had made a clean sweep of it. The members were few and not wealthy. Material was limited; there was a poor prospect of building up. But there were some excellent people, and some noble brethren. Ours was the only church in the place at this time. It was a garden well worth cultivating, which might one day blossom as the rose.

In addition to my other work, during the last year, I had engaged, incidentally, as I had opportunity, in selling books. The experiment hardly paid me financially, and did not, by any means, contribute to strengthen me in the affection and sympathy of the brethren. My experience in this respect convinced me that pastors can well afford to let colporteurs and regular agents run the book business. Colportage is a necessary work and demands encouragement. It may sometimes seem necessary, in the absence of book-sellers, for a pastor to give circulation to good books, but, even then, I am inclined to think he should do so without any wish to realize profits.

I held a meeting of one week in the summer at Monticello, doing all the preaching myself. There was one addition to the church, a young lady. I attended a pro-

tracted meeting after this, for a day or two, at Bethel. This church is three miles south of Monticello—Elder B. Crawford was the Pastor. The Maxwell family were prominent in the community. The meeting closed with excellent results. At Bethany, also, I assisted myself, and the meeting was not inferior to those of other years. As the present result sixteen were added to the church,



J. L. FINLEY.

and the brotherhood were united and strengthened. The same was true at Salem. I had to do all the preaching. There was a good meeting with several additions.

On the fifth Sunday in August a mass meeting was held at Mt. Carmel, in the school-house. Elder C. H. Otkin, proprietor of Lea Female College, located at Summit, was present. He contributed much to the interest of the meeting, and made, altogether, a favorable impres-

sion for his school. I know of no better qualified educator in the State.

On Saturday, before the first Sunday in September, came the meeting of the Pearl Leaf Association. It convened with the church at Central. We were ninety dollars behind on the salary of the missionary. This amount however, was raised by subscription, and afterwards paid. It was recommended that the mission work in the Association be curtailed to one-fourth of the missionary's time, which was done, and the work turned over to Elder J. L. Finley, who had recently been ordained. He was, at this time, elected Moderator of the Association.

A sore disappointment was experienced by many brethren at this meeting. Up to this time it had been considered best for the Pearl Leaf Association to do its own Mission work. This, for the reason that it was able to do it, and did not need the assistance of the State Board. It was feared that if we sought co-operation it might be an encouragement to some churches to depend on the Board, which was not desired; for the Board had already spent three hundred dollars, partly on our territory, when we belonged to the Pearl River Association. Moreover, we had all the State Mission work in our bounds that we could stand up to for awhile, and it was thought that to throw the responsibility of this work upon our churches would be the best way to enlist them, and develop the mission spirit. But as the work in the Association was now to be curtailed one-half, it was evident that we could do more for State Missions. And so it was moved that, in this matter, as in all other benevolent work, we should co-operate with the Convention Board. That course was urged on these grounds:

First, That we owed it to the State Board for assistance rendered in the past.

Second, That it was our duty, as we were able, to do more than was demanded by our Association.

Third, That we ourselves needed to feel that we were in full sympathy and co-operation with the Baptist Brotherhood of the State.



F. D. BAARS.

Fourth, That there was danger of concentrating all our interest on the little work which we were doing, and thus, instead of the affections and sympathies of our people being enlarged, they would be contracted, and we would dwarf rather than grow.

On the other side it was argued that it was best to confine our State Mission efforts to our own bounds until the work should be done. And, as the motion to commit

our work to the State Board meant, presumably, demands for more money * than otherwise, the motion was lost.

All the ministers present, so far as they expressed themselves, were in favor of the motion. This action caused great regret among many of the best workers. It was felt to be a triumph for the party of retrogression.

The time of separation was now at hand. On the third Sunday of September I met the people of Bethany for the last time, and the following Sunday I preached my last sermon at Salem. My closing service at both of these places was the pleasing one of baptizing a number of candidates.

I was succeeded at Bethany and Monticello by Elder F. D. Baars, who had already been one or two years in South Mississippi. He took the care of the Bunker Hill and Columbia Churches also.

Sunday night after leaving Salem I had the misfortune to stay with a bad friend, Dorch Benson. I had been under a mistake as to his character. I had somehow received the impression that he was a Christian, a standard member of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Under pretense of accommodation he proposed to trade me a fine young mule, which would be more ready sale than my pony. The proposition seemed plausible, and, having perfect confidence in the man, I made the exchange, and lost my pony, worth one hundred and twenty-five dollars. The mule I discovered was badly diseased, and I gave it away.

In a few days I took the train at Brandon in company with my sister. She was going to Summit to school, and I was bound for Louisville. We separated

* This decision was not reversed until two years afterward.

at Jackson. My purse was short; I gave her what money I had and borrowed means to defray my expenses.

It had been my desire for some years to make a trip to Greenwood, Le Flore County, in search of some relatives. My oldest brother and his wife had died near that town and left two little children. It had been five or six years since I had heard from them. There was now a branch road to Greenwood and the train leaving Jackson one morning was soon descending the hills that lower to the Mississippi Valley, then it turned up the Yazoo and along Tchula Lake. By twelve o'clock we were at Greenwood. The orphans were found living with relatives of their mother. I felt much like I was in dreamland. Some years before I had lived fifteen miles below here, and was now in the midst of a people from whom, on account of neglect, I had not heard in a half dozen years. I had seen my brother married here, and now the then joyous couple had gone, and two orphan children remained. I tarried in Greenwood two days, preaching both nights in a Presbyterian Church. On Friday morning I started across the swamp toward the Sunflower and Mississippi Rivers. I was carried by the mail-rider down the river to Shepherdstown. While he was bailing out the boat and getting ready to cross, I was musing on the great valley. My reflections crystallized into the following lines, which I have recorded for future returns to this section :

I stood on the bank of the dark Yazoo.*
Rolling his waves to the Southern blue.
Wide lay the extended valley 'round,

*The current traditional meaning of the Indian word, "Yazoo," when I lived on that river, was, "River of Death."

Where once Atlantic did resound,
And play with the giant hills of yore,
That burst his billows with frantic roar.
But now no floods the eye engage,
Save when, at the loads of ice enraged,
Sent down from the Northern hills of snow
Mississippi's borders all o'erflow,
And, wild with devastation high,
He sweeps the swamps his breakers by.
Far as the vision's orbit runs,
Rise forests of cypress, ash and gums,
O'er shading banks of bayous, breaks,
Rivers, ravines, lagoons and lakes.
Here, where insects swarm and panthers howl,
Malarial demons stealth'ly prowl,
They rear a death devoting brood,
And spread disease for many a rood.
Where once the Indian sparsely roamed,
Abound in state caucasian homes ;
And, where their wigwam's smoked, a few,
African quarters lie thick in view.
But ever, when the spring tides flow,
Thousands seek the world of woe,
For here the cross is not displayed.
The banner of blood in folds is laid,
And Satan holds in chains of hell
A land which can not break his spell ;
Defies the armies of heaven's king,
To subjugate his rich domain.
Oh, God, can it be by will of Thine ?
The golden land of all this clime,
In wealth of soil the very first,
Shall prostrate lie, by the fiend accursed ?
Thou mad'st the bed of the red sea dry,
And roll'dst back the waves of the Jordan high,
Thou smot'st the rock in the wilderness,
And gav'dst at length a glorious rest.
May it not be by power divine,
The strength of sin shall quick decline ?
Fountains pure in this earth be found ?
The floods in their own channels bound ?

Stagnant waters drained and dried,
Where deathly demons lurk and hide ?
Miasmal jungles cut from the ground ?
Health, joy and grace through Christ abound ?
Oh, God, the power, the right is thine,
Only the prayer of faith be mine.
Thy fame o'er all this region run,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.

As I ascended the western bank I saw a man in a two-horse vehicle some two hundred yards distant, moving off. I waved my hat and shouted, but to no purpose. He was gone and with him my hope of conveyance across the Sunflower swamp. I inquired accurately the distance: some said it was eighteen, some twenty miles. I could not afford to hire conveyance, and so I set out afoot. I was now passing through a country where twelve years before I had lived. Through the closes of these forests and along the borders of these lakes still float the shadows of my influence. This, indeed, seems like memory's burying ground, where I have vivid recollections of a transient, yet eventful life. Here and there my father gathered congregations and constituted churches that had dispersed like morning clouds. Here my older brothers toiled for wealth that never came. Those were days of promise that ended in disappointment. We hunted the wild deer and the bear in the woods, and sought the black buffalo and white perch in the lakes. It was to me the time of life when childhood blends with manhood, when fancy is busiest with the future, and there is no end to hope.

But our neighbors have passed away as well as we. Death has played havoc in the country. Of all those whom I then knew almost none are left.

I traveled about seven miles until I passed the limits

of the settlements. A swamp of twelve or fifteen miles lay in front of me; but just as I crossed Bear Creek, and was beginning to penetrate the dark swamp I observed a smoke rising ahead. As I neared the place there was a buggy standing loose, two mules grazing in the cane, and a man lying in the grass. "The tortoise and the hare," thought I. Halloo! friend, do you go to sleep here in the forest?" "Oh, I just laid down after a lunch to let my mules rest." "Which way are you bound for?" "Across the swamp." "Then I will solicit a seat in your buggy." The favor was kindly granted, and we soon started. It was the same man who had left me at Shepherdstown. He had come across to bring a Campbellite minister. The road was little traveled and naturally rugged from the mire that hardened under the summer sun, so we jogged along slowly. He was a Campellite and I a Baptist. We spent a good part of the time discussing the significance of baptism. He complained that I insisted on having a hump on his back. My friend was somewhat plagued when he drew out a small flask from the floor of the vehicle, to find that the stopple had come out, and all the precious liquid had escaped.

About twelve o'clock we reached the Sunflower River. A Mr. Rogers lived at the ferry, and I found that he and his wife were among the acquaintances of my father's family when we lived on the Yazoo. This gentleman, the next morning, carried me down the beautiful Sunflower, which, at this season, resembles a blue lake.

At Johnsonville, I boarded a mule wagon and was soon jolting through the dust. A three miles' ride brought me to Bro. Overby's, an old friend and former

resident of Rankin County. His son had married my sister, and to see her was the object of my visit.

The next day I preached at Mt. Bayou church. It was the day for the Methodist minister, who preached here twice a month. It was a union church house. The Baptist Church was alive and had regular monthly services. Monday, in company with the Methodist brother from Greenville, I took the train for Stoneville, and the same day, at one o'clock P. M. at Leland, I boarded a northbound train for Memphis. I reached that city about sunset, and had to lie over two hours. When I went to purchase my ticket for Louisville I lacked a dollar or two. While debating in my mind what should be the consequence the agent said, "There is a second-class ticket." That was a considerable relief. About nine o'clock P. M. we entered on the run to Louisville.

The session of the seminary had opened two weeks before. There were several Mississippi boys there. I dreaded the course much. I wished Louisville were ten thousand miles off, and I had a week to run it. In fact, I cared not much, consulting my feelings, whether I ever got there or not. I dreaded the course; and far more, I dreaded the after-course. All my life heretofore I regarded as simply preparatory, and this would be the last preparatory course. This would bring on the real battle of life. It could not be staved off much longer. It would soon be determined what I should be, and what I should do. At Louisville I would come in contact with those among the greatest of living minds. I was going there, too, absolutely without means, and with no light responsibilities.

The shadow of the future lay across my soul. I

never experienced so deep a sensation before. It was in the midst of such a feeling I approached the town, dreading to see the tall buildings come into view. But at length the train drew up at the long station, and about three o'clock P. M. I set foot on the pavements of the dreaded city.



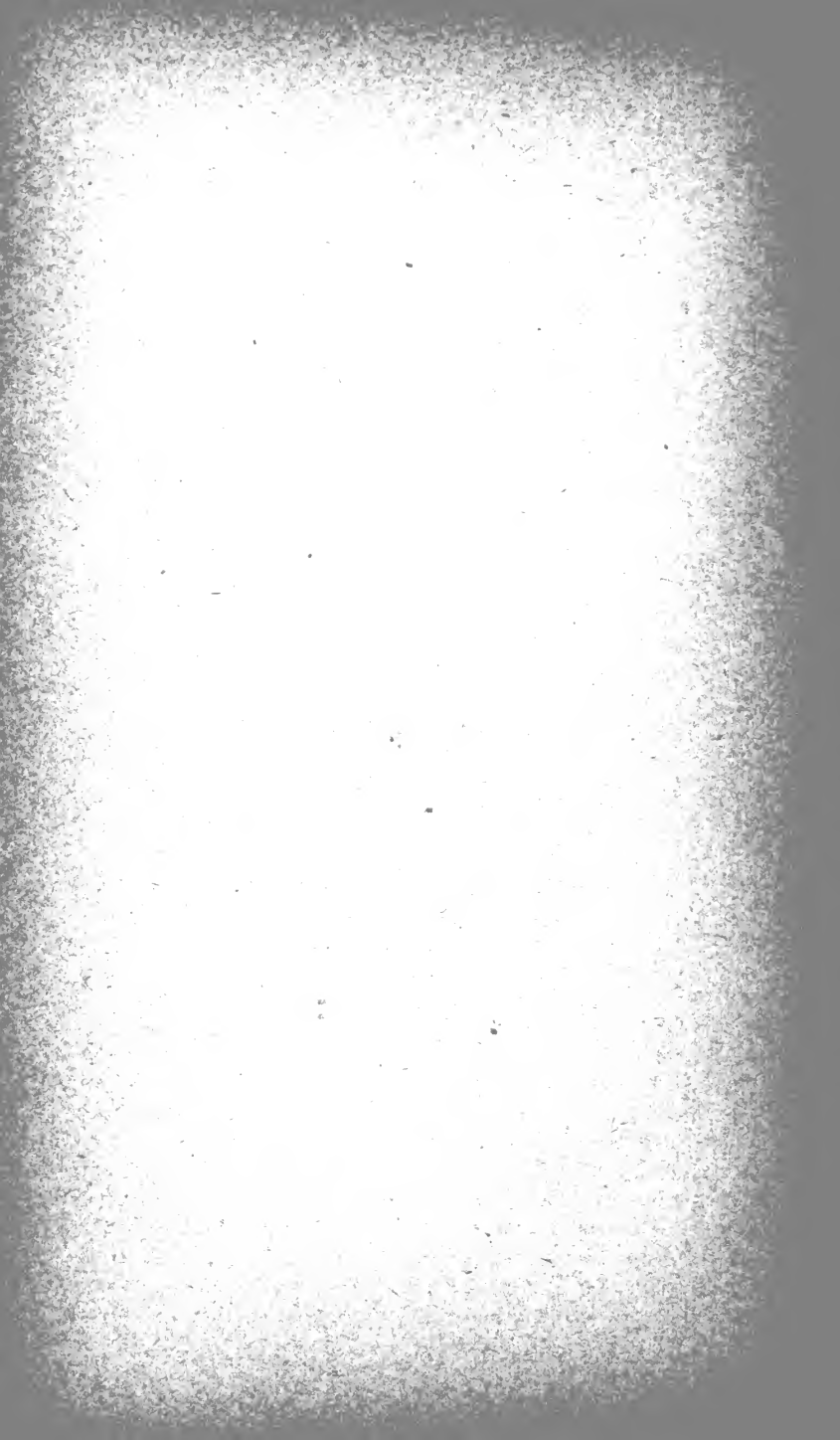
INTRODUCTION TO SUPPLEMENT.

It is my fortune to have acquired, through several years of school teaching a pleasing interest in the younger folks. And there is no service of this work in which I could take more pleasure than in presenting to this class of friends some token of my regard which I might feel would be appreciated.

Some of my former pupils have had the persistence to continue a correspondence with me during the whole of my seminary course. This has been to me a source of gratification ; and I can not better show my appreciation of their thoughtfulness, and my abiding interest in boys and girls at large than by publishing some of my answers which chance has preserved together with a few letters to other friends, all written during my first two years at Louisville.

This same interest suggested a preparation of a series of essays on simple subjects designed to impress lessons of a social and religious value. I have had time, however, to prepare only the four which are inserted. These, I trust, will, at least, serve as a proof to my youthful favorites that I still have an ambition to be their teacher and to do them good.

Very truly, T. S. POWELL.



SUPPLEMENT.

LETTERS.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Nov. 16, 1886.

To E—— M—— :

Dear Friend—Your letter was received during my late illness. I was not able to reply immediately. I was sick about three weeks; though not very bad at any time. I had been here only ten days, and had just become settled when I took the fever. Your letter afforded me great satisfaction. It is pleasant, especially in affliction, to be assured that we are kindly remembered. I am much pleased with the prospects. I am very hopeful, and feel not the least discouraged on account of my sickness. I realize that I am in the midst of friends, though they may be strangers to me. There are about one hundred and seven students in the seminary. The young ministers are a fine corps of pupils, and our teachers can not be surpassed anywhere. I am studying the Old Testament, the New Testament, Greek, and Hebrew. I have just four studies, and all my recitations are in the forenoon, so that I have my evenings to spend in any way I please. I have not yet engaged in any ministerial work; though I shall find something to do before long. Several of the students have churches in the country, to which they preach regularly. Many do mission work in the city. I feel quite at home here, and expect to remain, if not providentially hindered, full four years. I should be glad to see all my friends around Bethany. Remember me kindly to any who may inquire of me. I hope all are well, though hoping against hope, for I fear that some one will soon pass away. It may Bro. I——. God bless him, he has been useful, and may he have the comforts of religion in his last days. I feel that I want to say God bless all those who were good and true to me for so long a time. I trust they may realize that they were sustaining the Lord's cause. Strive to be

useful and happy. Be cheerful. Live close to God. Serve Christ. Believe that the Lord is your friend. Be always submissive to His will. For He knows and does best. I shall be glad to hear from you again.

Yours in Christian love and service,

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Dec. 18, 1886.

JENNIE POWELL, Summit, Miss.:

Dear Sister—Your last letter was received some time ago, and I must confess to neglect in answering,—sheer neglect. I was exceedingly glad to hear from you. It was a great relief to me to know that you were well. I am very much pleased at your progress. I know that you will improve your time. I would warn you against too close application. Take plenty of exercise. Be careful about your diet. Take plenty of time to eat. You are in good health now, I trust, and you do not know what it is to be an invalid; but it is my opinion that nine-tenths of college graduates injure their health while they are at school, and after the health is once injured it can never be entirely recovered. It will be to your interest to be attentive to all religious services. There is nothing that can so contribute to your happiness as true piety, and communion and fellowship with God, and constant exercise in his services. Moreover, there is, I am sure, nothing so much esteemed in a young woman as purity of heart and life.

If it would do any good, I would again express my regret that I am not able to furnish you all you need; but instead of complaining, I suppose we should rather be giving thanks that our situation is so good as it is, for we are surrounded with people in far worse circumstances; and I suppose that it is best as it is, for God is the best and wisest judge, and it is certain that if we trust and confide in him he will do with us what is best. This is proved by his dealings with those who have been faithful in all the ages as well as at the present time. At the same time you may be sure that there is no one for whom I care so much as yourself, and that so long as I can do anything I will do all in my power to provide for you. But above all, I would have you devoted to God through the gospel of Christ, and consecrated. Then I should know that whatever may be your situation you will be safe and even happy.

Send to Mr. C—— and get what you need. You need not send me the bill unless you wish. I hope you will get whatever is necessary to your comfort. I am in good health and am enjoying life well. I am also much pressed with studies. Examinations will come in about five weeks. I hope I shall get through all right. I send the envelopes according to your request.

If you want anything else special be free to let me know.

Your devoted brother,

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Jan. 1, 1887.

To E—— M——:

Dear Friend—I received your last favor some time ago, but have been so busy that I have deferred writing until now. I enjoyed Christmas exceedingly well, remaining in my room all day and applying myself to my books. We are having such weather as you are a stranger to in Mississippi. To-day has been missionary day at the seminary, as is the first day of each month, and to-morrow will be the pleasant Sabbath, the day of our Lord's resurrection. I have preached two or three times in the city at mission stations. I could not be satisfied if I did not preach some, though I am not engaged in any regular work. I am led to hope that I shall become acquainted after awhile and make many friends. I preached last night at the "highway mission." I have never before seen anything like the meetings held at that place. They have preaching every night by some one. It is on the side of one of the most public and business streets of the city, and men come right down into it, for it is lower than the sidewalk, being in the basement of a large building. Strangers, drunkards gamblers, outcasts are attracted and drawn into the services, and many of them are brought to Christ and saved. This work is going on every day. I was never before at a place where the work of soul-saving seemed so much like a business. Last Sunday I attended a mission school in the city, where there were over 250 children, little fellows most of them, wild and bad, as city children are apt to become. They were hard to control, and it was quite a sight. My course, as I realize, will be a great benefit to me. I would not miss it for anything and attempt to preach the gospel. Already I begin to feel stronger, and I think I shall be much better qualified to

preach even after one session. The course of study really delights me, and I shall try harder to master everything that I pass over than ever before.

A happy year to you. My love to all.

Yours truly,

T. S. POWELL.

To L—— P——:

Dear Friend and Sister—Your letter was received a few days ago. I was gratified to know that you had not forgotten me. I trust you are in the enjoyment of life. It affords me pleasure to know that my pupils are doing well. As you become older I hope you may grow in Christian grace, that you may live continually nearer to God and in daily communion with him. You will find that there is something for you to do in the world, and if you take hold of your duty in faith and submission to God you will enjoy a good degree of pleasure. While it is not for all of us to wear an earthly crown, nor even to possess great wealth and live in splendor and luxury, yet we may all aspire to an eternal crown of glory and honor, and to fullness of joy in the future world. I am glad to hear that the school is doing so well at Blountville. Yet I have no doubt it would be to your advantage to take some higher studies. I trust it will all be satisfactory. I came here with the purpose of staying and being satisfied. I had no intention of being discouraged by anything. I am getting along as well as could be expected. I do not feel that I am settled yet, for I have not engaged in any work except study. It has been difficult for me to catch up, since I came nearly a half a month late and was sick for several weeks. My health is now very good. I have all the ambition and energy that I ever felt, and look for a better and happier day. I will be glad to hear from you at any time when you feel like writing. Remember me to all my friends—your papa and mamma especially. Be assured of my best wishes and highest hopes.

Yours very truly,

T. S. POWELL.

To C—— M——:

Dear C——:—I was indeed gladly surprised at receiving your letter. I had looked for a letter from you until I had quite given it up. I am truly happy to know that you have not for-

gotten me. I did not think that you could forget me; for I am sure you know that I love you very much, and hold you in high esteem. It is delightful for me to think of you, and especially to receive assurances of your regard. I have not made the acquaintances of many boys and girls since I came here. I am especially fond of the company of children, and so it is a great joy to me to correspond with those whom I have known, and with whom I have been so intimate in past days. But while we are separated by so great a distance we can commune with one another, we can love the same Savior, worship and serve the same God. We can pray for one another and hold the same great purpose in view. I am glad to learn that you have a good school and Sunday school, and that you are attending them. These are certainly great privileges, and you should be grateful for them and improve them so as to give yourself every benefit. You are no doubt concerned about your future as to what kind of a woman you will be after awhile, and what position you will occupy in the world. This all will depend on how you improve your opportunities. You should be careful to learn to do any kind of work and to make it pleasant to work, for we all have to work in this world. At the same time you must improve and cultivate your mind by study, and your heart by serving God, and doing good to everybody. In this way you will become useful and happy in this life, and secure a crown of everlasting life. I would like to see you all very much. I hope we shall meet again some time. My session will be out in about six weeks. I expect to stay here the most of the summer. Write me again when you feel like it. I shall be glad to hear from you. Good-by for this time.

Truly,
T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., April 17, 1887.

To T—— B——:

Dear T——:—It has been some time since I received your last letter. You must not think I have been careless about answering. I have several correspondents, and sometimes, being so much pressed with duties, it takes me a good while to get around. If you want to make me happy just let the boys and girls whom I used to teach write to me. I enjoy such correspondence more than anything in the world. Your letter to Mr. Chastain was handed to me, and it gave me additional pleasure

to know that you felt so much interest in me. The Lord is still permitting me to live, and I am enjoying the world very well just now. The new spring always has a charm. We don't have much shrubbery in the city, but the trees are putting out their leaves, and the yards are receiving a green carpet; a few birds flit about in the branches of the trees and on the fences and doorsteps. I feel that I want to get out in the woods and hold converse with nature. It always seemed to me that the trees, when they are busy putting out their leaves and growing so still, can almost talk, and if they can not speak with an audible voice they certainly speak in their growth and budding and blooming. They show forth the praise of Him who made them.

It has been quite dusty for some time. The weather has been very fine, but yesterday it rained. It is cloudy and dripping to-day, and a little cool. I should like to be down on Whitesand and see the farmers at work. I have n't seen any farm work in so long. I have been through many of these dusty manufactories; have seen them making barrels, plows, stoves. The stoves are molded in the dirt. But the most amusing thing I have noticed is making bottles and jars. They get a roll of melted glass on the end of an iron tube four or five feet long and then blow it as you would blow a soap bubble, then thrust it in the mould, and the bottle is made.

The session will be out in six weeks. The Southern Baptist Convention meets here on the 6th of May. I am working very hard, not making much money, but enjoying myself quite well. I feel that I shall appreciate a rest. Write again when you feel like it. I shall be glad to hear from you. Give my love to all.

Truly,

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, KY., April 22, 1887.

To K.— L—:

Dear K—: Only a few days ago I received your letter. It thrilled me with pleasure. I have constantly thought of you with happiness, and I suppose I shall never forget you. You seem to me to be a very nice and good girl, and I have always loved you very much. It is a great privilege for me to write to you, especially since I know that you remember and love me in return. I suppose you will be interested to know something of my stay here. I found a great many strangers here, and Louis-

ville was a new place to me for some time. I have made many acquaintances though, and feel more at home. I have not, however, become so intimately associated with any of the boys and girls here, and those I left behind me still have my undivided heart. I trust you all enjoy yourselves, and spend a pleasant time at Blountville, and in your homes. I feel much interested in the school. I hope it may become permanently established. I trust you find it pleasant to attend Sunday-school also. How are you progressing in your studies? Do you ever feel that you love the Lord, now-a-days? I hope you will give Him your heart and become His humble and devoted servant. You are just now stepping into the highway of life, passing from childhood to womanhood. I suppose you would be tempted to smile if I should call you a woman, but it will not be long till childhood and girlhood will be passed. And you should be interested that your future years shall be even more happy than the days which have already passed. How can you be assured of this? Who knows what danger and darkness lie in the great future? If you are good and useful, if you give your heart to God and your hand to His service, He will guide you all the way, and if you are industrious and intelligent, careful to improve all your opportunities to benefit yourself and others, you will be happy. Do not hate work, for we must all work, and could not be happy without it. I shall always be glad to receive a letter from you. Feel free to write me. Remember me kindly to all the children, and now, good-bye.

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, KY., Nov. 1, 1887.

To C— M—:

Dear Friend:—I was very much gratified to have a letter from you, only a few days ago. I am glad that you redeemed your promise, and I am sure that if you could realize the pleasure it gives me to have a letter from you, it would not be very irksome for you to write. There is much in sympathy, and when you grow older you will find that the friendship of the young is of the very purest and truest kind. It is for this reason that I love so much to correspond with the children whom I have known and instructed. Pleasant relations were formed in those associations, and lasting impressions were made which I trust

will be productive of good in the days to come. It has been a month since school opened here. I have given myself unreservedly to my studies. To-day has been Missionary Day. The first day of every month is given up to the missionary meeting. We had speeches from two Missionaries to-day, one from Rome, the other from South America. We have a large number of young ministers here. We all, or nearly all, room in the same building, and take our meals in the same dining-hall. If you could be present some time you would think it a jolly crowd of preachers. Mr. Bush is my room-mate. He is getting along well. There are five or six hundred medical students here, too, but they do not live at the same place. Almost anything is going on here; but I seldom have time to go to any entertainments. I presume they have no school at Blountville. You spoke of Miss L——'s teaching, I hope she will do well. If you have an opportunity to attend Sunday-school I trust you will not miss it at any time. And do not fail to go to church every time you can; go up near the pulpit, and take part in the service. Do all the good you can in every way; helping every good cause and everybody, for this is what we should live for. I hope E—— B—— will do well. I must write to her. I tender my sympathies to your mother in her sorrow. We must, at some time, leave loved ones to mourn for us. We should live a good and useful life, that we may be prepared, and that we may leave here a good example.

As ever, your friend,

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, KY., June 8, 1887.

To L—— P——:

Dear Friend:—I think I am due you a letter. It has been some time since yours was received, but the memory of it still lingers in my mind. I have not answered so soon as I should have done, but it affords me much pleasure to write now. The session of the Seminary has closed, and nearly all the boys are gone. A few remain to watch over the missions in the city. I guess I shall remain here nearly, if not all the summer. I enjoy city life more and more, with its racket. Louisville looks much better since spring opened. It has got to be a right pretty city, some parts of it are very fine. They are quite well supplied with shade trees. At this season they resemble a

forest. I feel much more easy since examinations are over, and I am not crowded with study ; yet I have plenty of hard work to do, and it is growing warm. I spend my time in studying, writing and selling books. I expect to begin some missionary work in the city, among the working men, pretty soon. I have some hopes of visiting Mississippi in August, but I can not divine yet what the future will bring about. It certainly would afford me much pleasure to meet so many friends. I learned through Mr. W—— that Bethany has been having more trouble. It is to be hoped that a better day will dawn in the future. The children have all quit writing to me. I do n't know why, unless I write them such loving letters. I have not heard from Miss K—— in some time. I think I am due her a letter. I have treated her about like I have you ; but I must do better. I hope you are enjoying life. If not, I am sure it is because you are not trying. Trust in the Lord and do good. Live holy and true, exercising faith in God and obedience to all His commands. I would be glad to see you. Let us hope we shall meet soon.;

As ever, very truly,
T. S. POWELL.

MRS. H. C. CRANE :

My Dear Sister :—I was much gratified at receiving your very welcome letter. It reminds me of old times, and, though circumstances have changed, and we are far apart, yet still the tie of brother and sister binds together across the country. Sacred will be this bond till death. I am glad that you are so hopeful. While you have some difficulties in the way, you have much to encourage you. You have a promising family of children to rear, and to rear well a family is the highest work that a woman can do. In this way she may serve her country and honor her Creator. I hope you will have some religious enjoyment and social pleasure. Religion will do more to soften the rough places of this life than all else besides. The only hope that I ever have is in God, my Savior. He has never left nor forsaken me, and I am persuaded that He is ever with those who trust fully in Him. With best wishes, and hoping to hear from you again when convenient, I remain

Your brother,
T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Jan. 12, 1888.

MR. W. E. C.:

Dear Brother—Your kind letter was received some weeks ago. I was glad to hear from you, to learn that you had gathered your crop, and that your prospect is some brighter than last year. This is a world of hard work to those who accomplish anything, and sometimes when we work hard we do not reap the profits which we would like to reap, yet we should not be discouraged. Honest industry will succeed. All the successful men of the world have been hard workers, as a rule, and besides we can not be happy unless we are industrious. Our Saviour did not despise labor, for he worked at a carpenter's bench. I hope that you will be encouraged to set out on the new year with cheerfulness and determination to be more successful this year, trusting to a generous and kind Providence to reward your efforts. Hoping that God may bless you in all your relations, I remain, as ever, Your brother, T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., April 11, 1888.

TO T. B.:

Dear T—:—I guess you have wondered what prevented me for so long from answering your kind letter. I plead guilty to the fault of neglect, but I am glad that I have the privilege of answering now. I have been more busy this year than usual; and the session is nearing the close. My examinations have already commenced, and for the next six weeks I shall not have much rest, except in slumber. Our winter seemed to me the severest I ever experienced, though they say it was not so severe as last year. It seemed more so to me. We have moved into our new building since I wrote you, I believe. I am occupying a room to myself. I have not had a room-mate since Bro. Bush left. The new building is a fine one, very convenient in every respect. I hope to remain in the city next summer, but am not sure that I can do so. I do n't know either whether I can make my visit to Mississippi or not. We are having quite pleasant weather now. I suppose we shall have no more very bad. I receive once and awhile a letter from some of my pupils on Whitesand. I am always very glad to hear from them. I am gratified to know that the schools have been doing well this year. I have had some thoughts lately that may be you would

become a minister. Have you decided yet what will be your occupation in life? The farmers, I suppose, are now busy planting. I trust they will have pleasant summer showers. I hope that I may be permitted to spend a few weeks in the company of friends of other days in that section, but I do not know. I have a letter from Mr. Baars this evening. He seems to be pretty well satisfied, except that he complains of his work being confining. I would be glad to meet with him in South Mississippi next summer. Begging pardon for delaying so long, I will close. I hope to hear from you when convenient.

Yours very truly,

T. S. POWELL,
Seminary Building.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., March 16, 1888.

To L—— M——:

Dear Friend L——:—It has been so long since I received your letter you must have concluded that I am not going to write to you this time. I am sometimes neglectful, though I am sure I ought not to be, when you are so good to write to me. We have had the severest winter I ever saw. For about six weeks the boys were skating all over Louisville. I never saw any skating before. The children up here have some sport that you down there are ignorant of, such as skating and sliding down snow hills. But it begins to look now a little like spring is coming. The farmers in your country are plowing and planting, but it is yet too early for that up here. I suppose you have been going to school some, and I trust you have learned much. Do you still hold out a good Christian? You will have many a hard struggle with yourself, but try to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Learn to study the Bible while you are young. I have heard some grown people say that they could not understand the Bible. If you would understand the Bible, you must study it, and if you don't begin to study it while young you will never be much of a Bible student. The Sunday-school, as well as the church services, will help you to understand the Bible. I trust you have made the acquaintance of Mr. Robinson. If you have not, do so the first opportunity. Hereafter make it a point to get acquainted with your pastor. Let him know that you are a member of his flock, and do not be either afraid or ashamed of him.

My health is very good. In three months this session will be out. I don't know whether I shall see you next summer or not. I hope so. My love to all.

Your friend and teacher,

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., March 16, 1888.

To I—— B—— :

Dear I—— : You wrote to me a good while ago, and I have neglected to answer. I have kept putting it off because of so many duties, but I have not forgotten you. I still think of you, and I shall never forget how you looked when you were my pupil. I suppose you have been going to school this year. I trust that you are learning fast. Do you go to Sunday-school anywhere? You ought to go to Sunday-school as well as to other religious meetings every time you can. Learn to study the Bible while you are young, and you can understand it, and it will do you good all your life. Be very kind to your parents. Obey them in everything; try to help them. Be kind also to your brothers and sisters and playmates. Remember that God always sees you; and live and act so as to please him. Be a good girl. I want to write a few words to Ella. So I will close. If you will write me again I will not be so long answering. I am always glad to hear from my pupils.

Your teacher,

T. S. POWELL,
Seminary Building.

MRS. E—— N—— :

Dear Friend :—You used to be my pupil, and I hope our friendship will never be broken. I am glad to hear that you are happily married, and may your future life ever be as pleasant as the last few months have doubtless been. Be faithful in everything. Make home happy, for unless home is pleasant, life will be miserable. Be constant, if possible, in your attendance on church. Do all you can to help along the cause of Christ, and in doing good you will be happy. I do not expect you to answer these lines. With best wishes,

Farewell,

T. S. POWELL.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., May 10, 1888.

K—— L—— :

Dear Friend K—— :—From the length of time I have taken to answer your kind letter, I fear you will think that I did not enjoy it, but I assure you I was very glad, not to say happy, to hear from you. There is nothing can give me more satisfaction than to know that I am remembered by those with whom I have been pleasantly associated in past days. I have enjoyed very fine health all this session, but I have worked harder than ever before, for the reason that I have had more to do. My work, however, for this session is almost done, and I shall have another long vacation. I shall remain at Louisville, with, perhaps, a short visit to Mississippi. I have been going out in the country to preach almost every Sunday for a good while, and I have enjoyed it very much. Louisville is very pretty at this season of the year. I never get tired of walking around and looking at the beautiful buildings, green yards, and shade trees. I have just been walking this evening. The city never seemed more lovely to me. I trust that you have made good progress in school this year; and may I not think, too, that you have given your heart to the Lord in his service? I hope I shall have the pleasure of seeing you a Christian. I have much good hope of you. If you improve your time and all your opportunities you will not regret it in the future.

Expecting that I may see you before many months, and that I shall hear from sooner, I must close.

Very truly,

T. S. POWELL,
Seminary Building.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., May 17, 1888.

To L—— P—— :

Dear Friend :—I believe I am due you two letters. I will try to pay part before I retire to-night. I have been so extremely busy this session that I have scarcely taken time to write to my most respected friends. The session is now nearly out, only about fifteen days remain. My examinations are all over but one, which comes next Wednesday. I am making my arrangements to remain here this summer, if possible. I have not tried to make other arrangements. If I should fail to stay here I reckon I will play out. I don't know whether I shall be able to

visit Mississippi in the summer or not. I hope I may. I shall spend a right pleasant summer here, provided I get enough churches to support me. I have only one church at present, and that a small one. I have some more in prospect, but I can not be sure. If I am able to carry out my design, I shall remain here two years yet. I can complete the full course next year, but I want to stay and take an extra course. This will be my last school and I am loath to leave it. Several of the graduating class are going to foreign fields this summer and fall. Bro. Chastain has applied for work in Mexico. Five have been appointed for that field. We have not yet learned their names I don't know whether he is one or not, but I presume he is. You have certainly learned of Miss K——'s marriage. I have no acquaintance with the gentleman, but I presume she has done well. I was made glad to learn of Mr. B——'s joining church; yet it was sad that he lost his daughter. No doubt that had some influence in determining his action. He always appeared to me to be an honest man. Mr. J—— L——, I learn happened to a serious accident. I trust the Lord may yet bring him to repentance and duty.

May it be my lot,
 When August grins a smile,
 To greet a spot,
 Distant many miles,
 And know again
 What 'tis to drink
 Unmingled joy
 From friendship's cooling brink.

Truly, T. S. POWELL,
 S. B. T. Seminary.

LOUISVILLE, KY., May 18, 1888.

To E—— M——:

Dear Friend:—It has been quite a long time since, one morning, I was made happy by your letter. It was unexpected. You had not written to me in so long that I had despaired of hearing from you again. I guess I have fully taken vengeance for the long delay of yours, though it had not been my purpose to retaliate. Our session is now nearly out. I trust you have succeeded well with your studies, and that you have been well pleased with

Blue Mountain. I had a letter from Mr. Baars sometime since, which I have not yet answered, but I must write to him soon. I wonder if he is not getting tired of teaching? Should I go to Lawrence this summer I would be glad to meet him there, as well as yourself and your mother. I had a letter from Bro. W—— ten days ago. He wrote that Bro. B—— M—— is still in bad health. I hope I may see him again. My sister is still at Summit. If she can continue next year I presume she will complete her course. Miss M—— H——, I believe, graduates this Commencement. Bro. Lomax is to preach the Commencement sermon. I should like to hear him.

Come again, and welcome ever,
To the soul's lone interview,
For the deeds forgotten never,
For the thoughts that come with you.

As ever, T. S. POWELL,
S. B. T. Seminary.

THE RECOLLECTION.

Do you know that each of us is setting out on a journey? It is the journey of life. All who have lived before us have made this journey, each one by himself. We may learn something of a way which we have not traveled, by talking with those who have passed over it. Here is an old man who has almost finished this journey. He is now near its end. Let us hear what he says about it. He is so very old that what he has passed over seems to him like a dream.

He remembers a time when he played about a lovely house. It was spring; roses were in bloom; bees and humming-birds gathered sweet liquids from the flowers; mocking-birds sang in the shade trees near the house, and larks and patridges whistled in the fields.

He worked some in the garden with his mother, but the work was not hard. He was then a little boy, and he thought much of when he would be a man. Brothers and sisters and other children played with him.

After this he was in the fields where field-hands were at work, and was helping, now planting corn, and now plowing or hoeing, then gathering potatoes or picking cotton. Sometimes he wanted to get out of this work, for it was harder than play. He preferred to chase the hare with hounds, to trap for birds; and, when the dogwood was in bloom, to decoy the fish with a hook and worm from their watery beds.

Then he remembers attending a house far off by itself. There were many children of every size and age. The

boys played with ball and bat. The girls had play houses under the bushes. When all were seated in the house with books, and slates, and pencils, a man walked the floor with a rod in his hand, and frowned on the idlers.

The scene has changed. He is at a graveyard. The mounds of dirt mark the places of the dead. The white marble slabs stand up to say that death comes to all. Many people are weeping as a coffin is lowered into the grave.

From here he wanders. Night comes on him. He is lost, but a friend comes to him and leads him out of the thicket of darkness. It is day, and he finds himself at another house. The people in the house are singing. The song which they sing is :

“ Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me ;
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.”

Again they sing :

“ There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.”

They read from a book : “ Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in spirit, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

He was in trouble, but here he finds one that comforts him and leads him to take part in the singing, and so he becomes happy.

After this he was the owner of a home. He had a

cheerful and pleasant wife. His own little children were around him. They made life joyful. The days then were bright and happy.

Again he has moved. He is in a great city with its noise and turmoil of business. People are crowded thick about him. His children are scattered. Cares and troubles come. He has successes, but he has also failures and losses. But he has now passed through it all. His fortune is changed and he is left all alone. He thinks he is soon to make another move which will be his last. He expects then to meet many whom he has known and loved in other days, and be forever at rest.

Now I must explain to you this old man's recollection. The time when he played about the homestead was innocent, joyful childhood, the early morning of life. Then the world was young, beautiful and lovely; and when he worked in the fields, was boyhood. Every one must learn to work. He who does not work is of no account. The school-house comes next, where there is much pleasure in play with school-mates, and here also wisdom is learned to guide us rightly through life. And then the graveyard, alas! That means that sorrow and death come to all. But if we trust in God, He will guide us. His spirit will lead us through all the trials. The church-house stands next on the way, where God is worshiped, and where Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners, meets with those who are sorrowing on account of sin, and gives them peace, if they will believe on Him. Then he has a quiet home, as most of us hope to have at some time.

The great city is the business of the world, with its cares, confusions, and disappointments. The move which he is soon to make is to the other world, for there is an-

other life after this. We, too, must make this move. All the dead shall be there. We shall see the angels. We shall meet God, and there shall be no more change or passing away. That life comes immediately after this.

THE HOTEL.

The hotel, you know, is the house in the city where travelers stay, and such people as have no home. Most persons who come to the city on short business stop there. You would find people there from New York, California, Canada, Mexico and other parts of the country. You might find some also from Europe, and a few from Asia. All classes are represented; farmers who have come to sell their produce; merchants from other parts of the country who are buying goods, and all other kinds of business men and travelers. Some are poor, scarcely able to pay their bills, others are immensely rich; some, too, are the very best Christians, while others make no pretensions to religion.

Some stay long enough to take one meal, some stop a day and night, others again remain a week or a month, and some few a year or more, but it is not a home for any, except the proprietor. They meet, mingle together for a short time, and part to meet no more.

Let us imagine that we are going into a hotel. Immediately on entering we are met by the porter, who takes our baggage, which he is to keep safe for us. In front is a large counter with an open book upon it and a clerk standing behind. We must go thither and register.

When we have written our names on the book, with the place we are from, the clerk assigns us a room, where we can now go and make ourselves at home.

Just over there is a stand where cigars and such like

are sold. Some hotels have also a place where strong drink is dealt out, but we have no money to spend so vainly.

We will now entertain ourselves for a few moments looking at the people who come in. Here comes first a number of drummers. They frequent the hotels and form the largest class of travelers. Each has a large valise or grip-sack. Some have two or three. Their business is to sell goods. They are much like peddlers. The difference is that they carry samples of the goods which they sell and take orders from merchants for large quantities, while the peddler carries all his goods with him and sells to anybody. One man is traveling for a dry goods house in New York. He has calicoes, linens and other articles of clothing. Another represents a hardware house in Connecticut. He carries knives, scissors and other kinds of cutlery. Another still is working for a jewelry house in Philadelphia. He deals in breastpins rings, watches, etc.

Here comes next a company of tourists, school teachers, preachers and others who have a rest from business. It is the season of vacation, and they are on the way to some watering place in the East. They will, no doubt, visit the city of Washington and Niagara Falls. They may go out to the far West, and take a look at the national park. Here comes also a party of stage players. They travel through the cities like showmen and make money by acting.

But who are these copper-colored strangers? They are Japanese travelers, who are on a tour of sight-seeing through the United States. They are rather swarthy, but when dressed in our style they look much like American gentlemen.

Going up a flight of stairs we enter a spacious parlor, richly carpeted and furnished with soft seats. This is the sitting-room of the hotel. It is now almost vacant. A few ladies are conversing softly. Away off to one side are a young man and lady. It is a missionary and his * wife. They have just been married and are expecting to go to Africa soon. The lady says she is anxious to go, that she has always felt an attachment to that people.

From the parlor a door opens into the dining hall, where we shall have business after awhile.

Let us now take a seat in the parlor and meditate on what we have seen. These people we do not know. They are strangers to us, but each one has his peculiar history and his own business. Each has his prospects, and rushes to that destiny which is before him. They keep good order. They are not lawless or unruly. This would not be allowed. If there should be any misconduct the proprietor would have the disorderly person arrested and sent to jail.

They are also very polite. They seem to be on their best behavior, for each man desires to be considered a gentleman, and every woman wishes others to think she is a lady. They have learned, too, that happiness depends on mutual respect. Hence they are considerate of the feelings and wishes of others.

Reader, this world is a great hotel. We have come into it to stay awhile. We meet all kinds of people. We do not fully know any of them. Even our most intimate friends have secrets which they tell to no one. While of this we may be sure that each has his interest, his hopes and fears and his final destination. Some will

*Rev. A. Watkins of Mississippi.

stay here longer than others. But none will stay forever. Every one must leave the world alone.

The world is not our place of dwelling. The proprietor of this hotel is the Lord God. We are in his power and subject to his laws. His all-seeing eyes are beholding us. His angels are about us. For any wrong-doing we shall be surely punished, both in this world and in the future, for he is able to be cast both soul and body into hell, or bring them to a happy and eternal life.

We must know, then, that this world and all that is in it with ourselves belong to God. For we are dependent; and as we brought nothing into the world with us, we can not hope to carry anything away. It is our duty, therefore, to live in the fear of God, with the purpose to honor him.

This we can do :

First, by abstaining in our conduct from everything that is sinful, injurious or disgraceful.

Secondly, by loving our fellow-men so as not to do them any harm, but rather to do them every good in our power, for their interests are as dear and sacred as our own.

Thirdly, by submitting ourselves to God in heart and life, walking according to his commandments, confessing to Him our sins, offering thanksgivings for all that we enjoy, and in praying for his blessings in all things.

You may now retire to your rooms, and see to it that you conduct yourselves rightly in this great hotel.

THE INSTRUMENT.

An instrument is something to work with. The ax is an instrument used for cutting wood; the scissors for cutting cloth; the plow for stirring the soil.

There are instruments for every kind of work. The farmer uses plows and hoes. The carpenter needs planes, chisels and saws. The surgeon must have knives and lances and hammers. The shoemaker bores holes with an awl, sews with a needle, and drives pegs with a hammer. He makes shoes on an instrument called the last.

It is important that an instrument should be in good condition. You can not cut with a dull ax or saw. You could not bore with a blunt awl, nor sew with a broken needle. The hammer must have its face square; a chain must have every link sound.

The instruments which I have mentioned have been made by man. They are of great use. We could not well get along without them. But there are others which God has given to us much more valuable. Among these is the eye, which is an instrument for seeing. Many people are deprived of sight. Not a few have never had eyes. They seem to get along and enjoy themselves quite well where they have had a chance, yet it seems to us, who have the pleasure of looking on the beautiful world, that this would be a dreary life if we could not see.

The ear is an instrument by which sound is produced. Through it come all the voices of music and the tumult of the world.

The tongue is quite a noisy instrument. It often gives much trouble, because it speaks what ought not to be heard.

The instrument with which we work is the hand. It is a wonderfully made machine. It is suited to a thousand kinds of work. Nothing more clearly shows the wisdom of God.

The heart is one of the instruments which God has placed in the bosom to keep us living. By its regular beat the blood is kept flowing through the arteries and building up the waste places of the body. The blood is the life of the body, and when the heart no longer sends it through the arteries we can not live.

But the heart is spoken of also as the seat of love. In this sense it is even more important, since it is the condition of the heart that determines what kind of person one is. We are good or bad according to what we love. If we love bad company and bad habits it proves that we are not good, for the heart is not right. How shall the heart be made and kept right? Only by giving it to God. He made it and he can keep it. If the heart is right then our conduct will be right and we shall be safe from the ruin of sin.

Another instrument which God has placed in the bosom is conscience, or the moral sense. This monitor discerns right and wrong; and warns us to do the right and shun the wrong. You can do nothing worse than to violate your conscience. It will surely bring shame, sorrow and suffering. The Scottish poet, Burns, gives this good advice:

“Its slightest touches instant pause;
Debar all side pretences,
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.”

The last instrument of which I shall speak is the mind. It is the instrument used to think with. You will see that it is very important. We can do nothing without thought. The fine dwelling houses must be framed in mind before the workman could fashion it into wood or stone. That striking picture was seen by the artist before he painted it. So the farm must be laid out and cultivated in the mind before a plow is started. The great general who wins battles must lay out his campaigns before he marches, and he must make a plan of each battle before it is fought.

The brain work is the most important part of the work. The most ignorant man can work with his hands, but he needs some one to tell him what to do. It is more desirable to know what to do, and how to do it, than it is to be able to do the work after you are told. Why do some men succeed better than others under the same conditions? One reason is that they manage better. To manage well requires a trained mind. Now the mind, as well as the heart and conscience, may be improved just as the ground is made better by cultivation. You must keep your mind bright and sharp if you would do good brain work. The mind may be cultivated first by study. The study of books gives exercise to the mind and strengthens it. Hence we see the necessity of boys and girls going to school and worrying over arithmetic, grammar and spelling lessons. Reading good and instructive books at home also will make one intelligent.

Secondly, the mind is cultivated by experience in business. If a boy is going to be a farmer it is necessary that he should learn early to work on the farm. He must plow and ditch, and split rails, and make

fence. If a girl would be a nice housekeeper she must do housework.

A third way to cultivate the mind is by conversation. By frequently talking with sensible persons our minds will be made brighter and stronger. The Bible says, "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Finally, in order to have a good mind, it is very necessary to keep in good health, by using good diet, prudent care of oneself and bodily exercises. It is very common for young people to think nothing of preserving their health. They are either not wise enough to know the value of health or they are vain enough to suppose that nothing can make them invalids. In this way they make a great mistake and leave down a gap for disease to come in. The care of one's health is necessary to a strong and vigorous mind as well as to a stout and energetic body.

THE KEY.

You know what a key is for. It is used to turn a lock. When the lock is turned the door may be opened, and you may go in or out. Every lock has its own key.

The dwelling house key is most important. When all leave home the house must be locked in order to keep thieves out. Another key is the crib or barn key. It keeps the corn, hay and oats safe for the live stock. The trunk key prevents our clothing, letters and such private articles from being rumaged by other people.

A key which is not pleasing to think of is the jail key. It bolts a thick, heavy door, and holds the prisoner behind the bars. The man who has charge of the keys of a prison, is himself called the Turnkey. The watch or clock key is an exception to the rule. It does not turn a lock, but is used for winding up the weight or spring, so that the time-piece will run.

The keys of which I have been speaking are very valuable, but there are others of even more value, since they open the door to good character, success and happiness. One of the most valuable worldly possessions is good health, and the way to good health is found by a key. The key is, "take care of yourself." If you keep this key in good use you are not apt to become an invalid. Most diseases are brought on by failing to take proper care of oneself.

Knowledge is very desirable. It gives power, influence and much happiness. The key to knowledge is study and observation. Wisdom is more desirable

than knowledge. One may have knowledge without wisdom, but he can not have wisdom without knowledge. The key to wisdom is application, or putting into practice what you know is right and best. The key to popularity is flattery, not in the sense of undue praise, but in the sense of appreciating others, and, in a proper way, making your appreciation felt. No one can be popular who can not appreciate the excellent qualities of others as well as overlook their faults. But this is a dangerous key, for, while it is a good thing to be deservedly popular, some persons, in seeking to become popular, so pander to other people, and give up their own principles, that they are worthless and lose the very praise which they hoped to obtain. I am quite sure that it is not best for a young man or a young lady to seek popularity; but rather to avoid giving offense and to strive to be kind and useful, and to do right.

The key to respectability is right conduct.

Perseverance is the key to success. If you are earnest enough to hold on and keep working at your purpose, unless it be something entirely beyond your ability, you will most certainly succeed.

But the most important key I have not yet mentioned. It is the key to eternal life. We are almost sure to lose sight of its value, because we are thinking about the things of this world, as to what will profit or help us now, or satisfy our wants. These things are apt to claim too large a share of our attention and absorb our interest. It should not be so. We are booked for another world. This world will soon pass away. This is a changeable world. In that world nothing will change. We must leave here soon and go to the world of spirits. When there, we can not come back.

It may be that we are not prepared for the other world, since there we shall have to give an account to God our Creator. He will demand of us how we have spent this life, and all we have done. If we have not eternal life we shall then be condemned and lost, by reason of our sins. The life that we now have is mortal; it will very soon come to an end. The soul, it is true, will exist forever, but it may be in remorse, in despair, in flames of torture. If we possess eternal life we shall have joy, we shall have peace. Our sins shall be forgiven, and death will have no sting, nor the grave any victory. It will be only a sleep from which we shall awake in the resurrection morning as from a night's rest.

Only God can give us eternal life. We can not obtain it by any good deed or works. He bestowes it freely, without any money or any work. But he does not give it to all. Many will never have it, because they will not receive it. The key to this gift of God is faith in Jesus Christ, His son. If we truly believe in Christ as our Savior, Lord and Master, then will we serve Him, obeying His commands in this life, and at death we shall enter by God's grace into the free enjoyment of that eternal life which He gives and which will never end.

A SONG TO THE COTTON PLANT.

A song to the cotton plant,
That grows in my native South,
The fine, prolific plant,
Enriching many a house.

Sing to the cotton plant !
Modest, of form so rare ;
Type of its country's youth,
Gentle, true and fair.

Near the sun thou bloom'st,
In soft and radiant air—
Thy people are called gen'rous—
God knows my heart is there.

At first, a tiny herb,
Lifting up the soil
So timid, thou fear'dst
The frost thy life might spoil.

The weeds essayed to choke
Thy form from out the drill ;
The farmer helped thy growth,
The grass and weeds to kill.

The lice and rust have vied
Thy tender stem to slay,
But showers fell, sun smiled.
Thou mock'dst their strife away.

A lovely bush thou stand'st
With blooms that crimson red.
Thy limbs with bolls thou hang'st,
And leaves so neatly spread.

Sure thou art a favorite,
The people love thee so.
They oft themselves impoverish
A plenteous crop to grow.

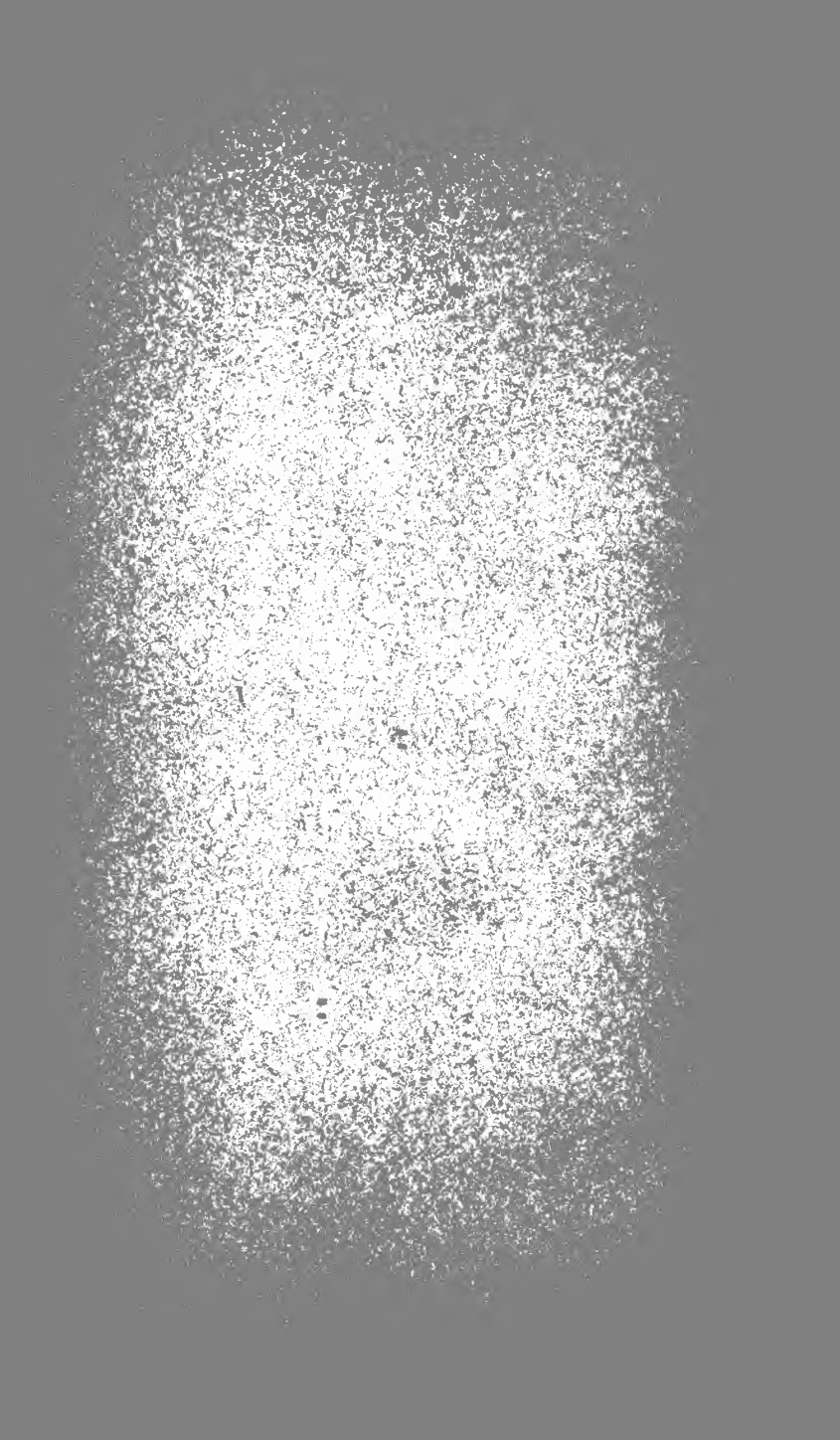
The factories claim thy staple,
The oil mill craves thy seed ;
Thy fibrous wood makes paper—
The world's most useful weed.

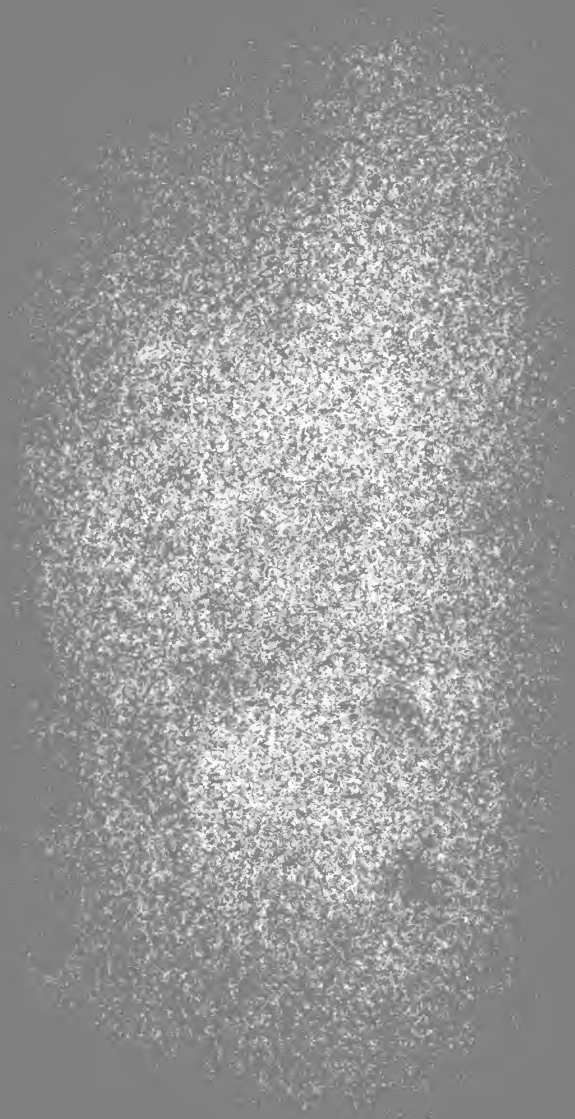
Like thee I've had a struggle,
Combatting illest foes,
But still I should not grumble,
Perchance I reach the goal.

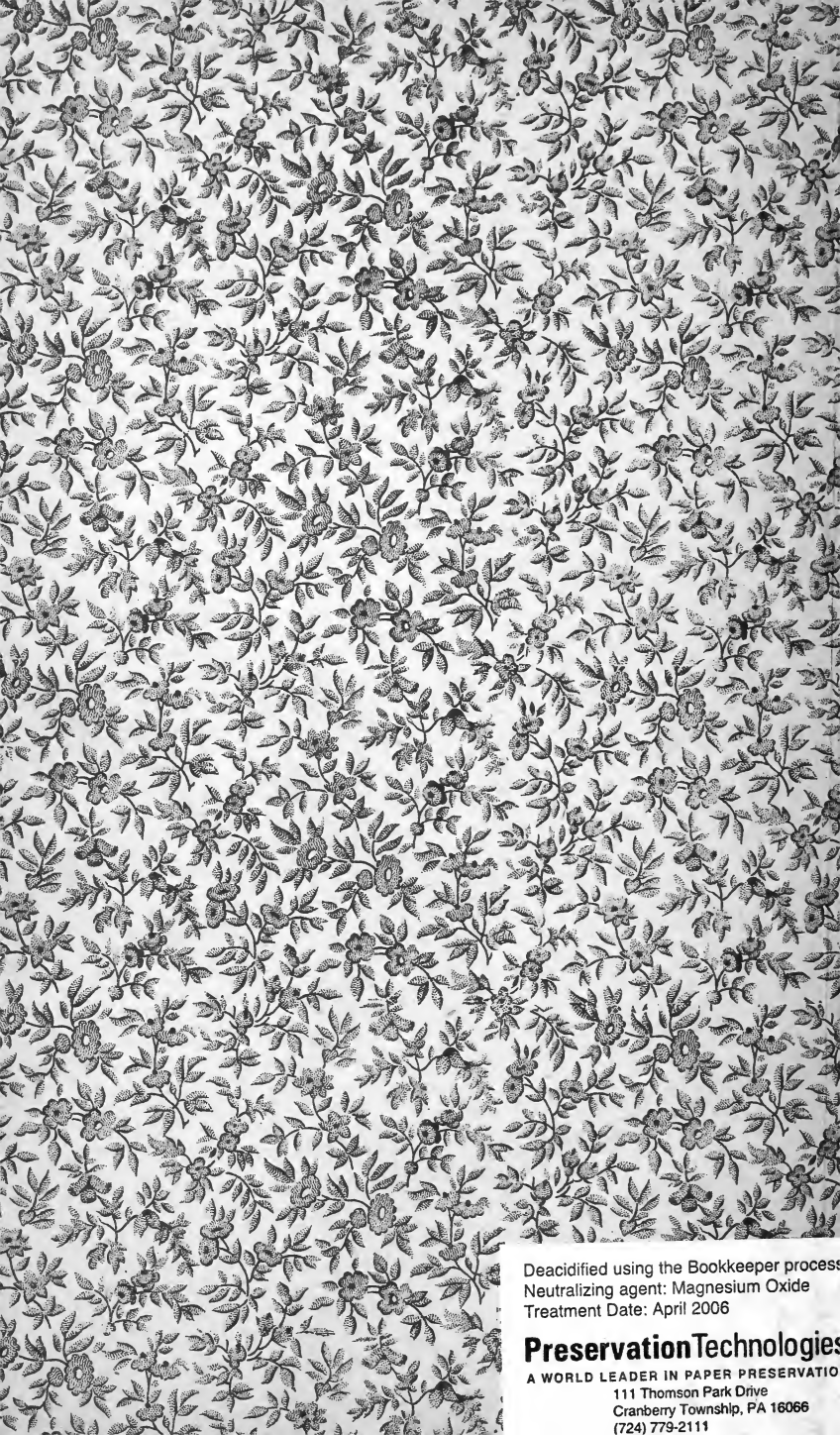
Thrust from the world's cold breast,
Tired of pastures drear ;
With thee I'll find sweet rest,
In thee there's friendship dear.

And when a blighted stalk,
Life's purpose realized,
Like thee in death I'll fall,
Like thee be utilized.

FINIS.





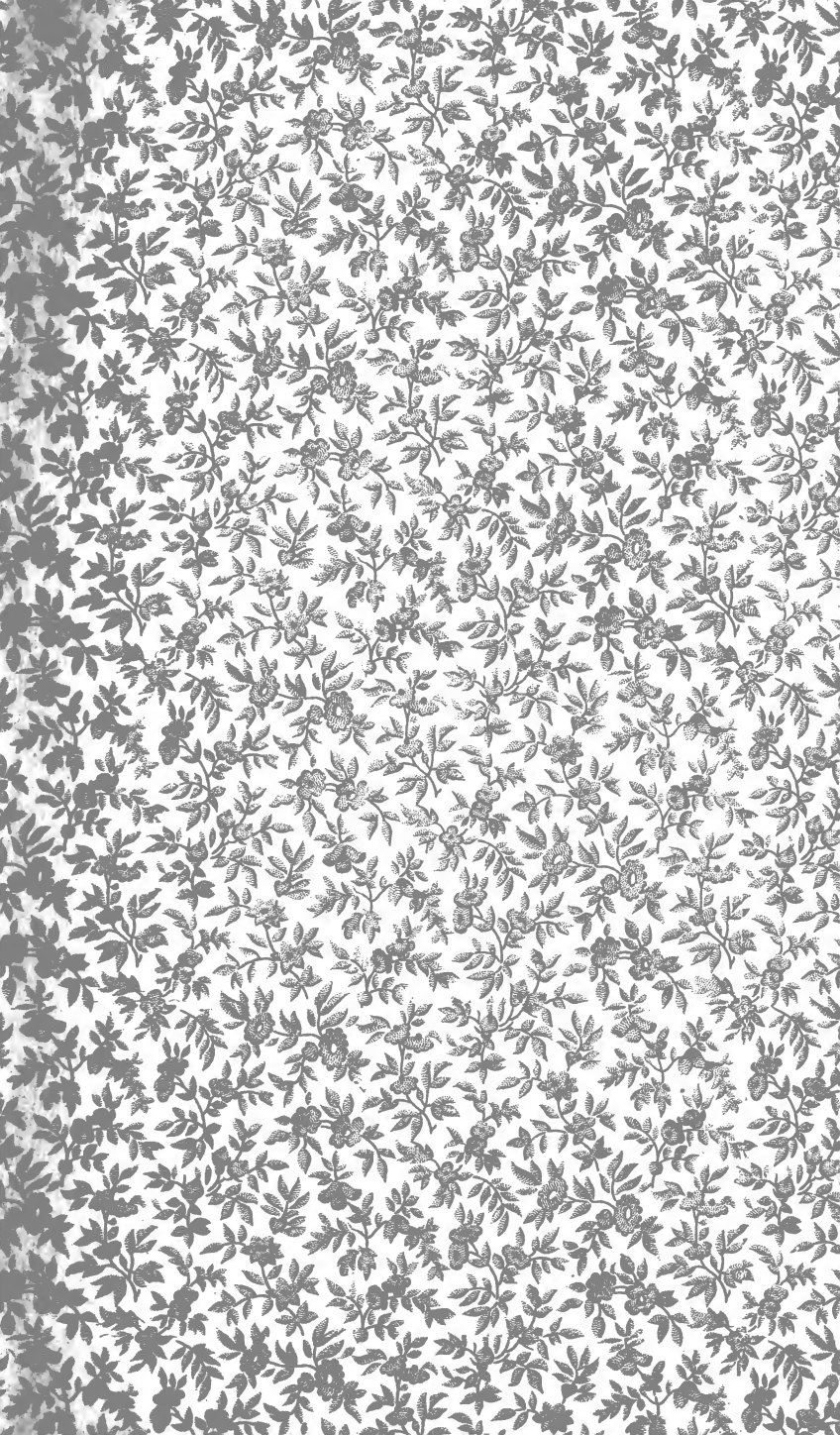


Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2006

Preservation Technologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 017 649 060 3